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HISTORY OF WIGAN.

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THE
HISTORY OF WIGAN.



BY DAVID SINCLAIR.

VOLUME I.

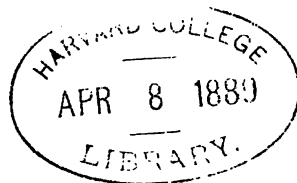
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PREFACE TO VOLUME I.

WIGAN has a history—a long and interesting one—and its claims to have that history published are indisputable. Considering its age and advantages, it has by no means risen to that greatness acquired by some of its neighbours that did not even exist in its infancy; yet, although of no mean importance now, in proportion to the national progress, it was once one of the greatest and most promising towns in Lancashire. Its history up to the middle ages is chiefly a history of All Saints' Parish Church, and from that period to the end of the last century the history of the church and the burgesses combined. The religious struggles were as keen in it, the progress of trade as important, the rise and progress of the burghal classes as interesting and instructive, the social development as wonderful, the military prowess, the political lethargy or activity as influential, and the traditions as bewitching and bewildering, as those of any town of equal size in England. Few towns can boast of such charters as it possesses or of such an honourable age. Its claims to a written history are indeed as great as those of any provincial town in England.

These volumes are not meant to be an antiquarian work, although information is inserted that must be of interest to the antiquary. My desire has chiefly been to write a history of Wigan for Wiganers. It is a local work. I have laid aside many old MSS. which are only valuable as relics, and I am by no means under the

impression that all is here published that has a local connection. Documents from the Record Office, London; rare publications in the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh; all papers and books published in connection with the county, the MSS. in the strong room at the Borough Courts, in the Town Clerk's office, the Vestry of the Church, in the custody of the Governors of the Grammar School, &c, I have perused, and yet am sensible that much unpublished matter in the hands of private individuals—and even in those places I have already searched—should be published before a complete history can be obtained, although I think that for the present it is neither desirable nor necessary to do so. Such a labour could only be pursued by an enthusiast of independent means, for even these volumes could never have been undertaken nor executed except by a lover of literary work. *Labor ipse voluptas.*

There has been an occasional divergence from chronological order for the better elucidation of the subject referred to.

A history of Wigan is one worthy of the very best illustrations obtainable, but I deeply regret that the insurmountable difficulty of expense prevents me from illustrating these volumes, and I have decided, wisely or unwisely, that it is better not to illustrate them at all than to do so unworthily. Not only could old views of Wigan be obtained for faithful engraving, but *fac-similes* of many of the old documents which I have had the honour and pleasure of laboriously perusing would be rare curiosities, welcome to the interested reader. Of such documents I may specially mention the charters, poll-books, petitions, Court Leet transactions, old minute books, and the original document constituting the first Common Council, with the autographs of the first members.

Assistance in such a work is an absolute necessity, and to accept assistance without acknowledgment is base ingratitude. I have been most kindly received by all from whom I have solicited information, but as I expect that in the prosecution of the work I shall receive further help, I postpone all mention of particular names to the last volume.

I have not considered it necessary to name my authorities for every statement, as a great part of every page would thus unnecessarily be taken up with references. Where very important facts are given references are added, and I here give a list of some of the authors and books whence I have derived much valuable information.

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|---|--|
| Assheton's Journal. | Lancashire and Cheshire Historical and Genealogical Notes. |
| Axon's Lancashire Folk-song and Folk-speech. | Lancashire Worthies, by Espinasse. |
| Baines' History of Lancashire. | Local Gleanings, edited by J. P. Earwaker, Esq. |
| Broadsheets, Old Newspapers, Civil War Tracts, and MSS. | Lord Campbell's Lives of Chancellors. |
| Calamy's Nonconformist's Memorial. | Macauley's History of England. |
| Camden Society's Publications. | Manchester Historical Recorder. |
| Carlyle's Letters and Speeches of Cromwell. | Markham's History of England. |
| Chetham Society's Publications. | Milner's History of England. |
| Dugdale's Baronage, &c. | Nichol's Literary Anecdotes. |
| Forster's Life of Cromwell. | Notitia Cestriensis. |
| Froude's History of England. | Palatine Note Book, edited by J. E. Bailey, Esq. |
| Green's History of the English People. | Parliamentary Inquisitions, Lambeth MSS. |
| Gregson's Portfolio of Fragments. | Pictorial History of Lancashire. |
| Hallam's History of England. | Porter's History of the Fylde. |
| Harland and Wilkinson's Legends and Traditions of Lancashire. | Roby's Lancashire Traditions. |
| History of Bolton. | Strype's Annals of the Reformation |
| Histories of Wales. | Whitelock's Memorial. |
| Hume's History of England. | Wigan Observer Local Sketches. |
| Lancashire and Cheshire Historical Society's Transactions. | Wood's Athenæ Oxoniensis. |

&c., &c., &c.

Colinfield, Wigan,
June, 1882.

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THE
HISTORY OF WIGAN.

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A TOWN without age, or of mushroom growth, can have no history, whereas even a village that lays claim to antiquity is as interesting as the last living veteran who has only been a common private in the ranks of a distinguished corps. Wigan has not only existed during nearly two thousand years, but has very frequently figured specially in the national annals. She took her part in instituting and maturing the British Constitution; stubbornly defended the monarchy during the dark times of headstrong and unbridled revolutions; shared the misfortunes of defeat, and reaped the rewards of constancy. Ruthless rebels dismantled her; special honours were bestowed on her at the command of royalty. In the eyes of old bigoted Protestants, she, having sheltered Roman Catholic heretics in almost every house, seemed as venomous as a nest of hornets; and when Papists had their day of power she humanely protected hunted Protestants, and was often zealous in the wrong. Many of her long list of Parliamentary representatives were distinguished legislators, soldiers, and civilians. Some of her Mayors have been connected with royalty by

marriage ties, and many were citizens distinguished for their honest accumulations of great fortunes as well as for pious philanthropy. Many of her sons displayed a bounteous Christian charity, the benefits of which will continue to be reaped to the latest generations. But there are many blots in the pages of her interesting history, which, like antique manuscripts with artistic illuminations, should be preserved and not destroyed, because of having, here and there, a disfigured or musty page. Before, however, proceeding with the work in hand, that of writing a chronological history of this "ancient and loyal Borough," a few words will not be out of place as to the earliest known inhabitants of the locality, and a brief mention of its condition before the Roman invasion.

There are two great branches of the Celtic race, the Gaelic, and Cymric or Welsh, and to the former belonged the Albiones, who were the aborigines of Britain. They inhabited the whole of the island when it was invaded by a Belgian colony of Britanni, who were also Celts, but of the Cymric or Welsh branch. They defeated the Albiones and drove them to the north of the island, where they afterwards assumed the name of Caledonians or Picts, and are to this day represented by the Gaels or Highlanders of Scotland, whilst the ancient Britanni are represented by the Welsh. At the same period Ireland was inhabited by the Hiberni, who were overpowered by the Scots in the same manner as the Albiones were by the Britanni. The Scots—meaning wanderers—were a race of invaders hailing from Spain. They conquered Ireland and proceeded to found a colony in Argyleshire, Scotland, for their chief characteristic then, as now, was restlessness tempered with caution. They are to this day found in every inhabited part of the globe, where their restless, migratory nature only gives place to steady caution, when success is achieved or reasonably hoped for. They became very friendly with the Albiones or Picts and were thus faithful allies against the Saxons. It is true that no foreign foe has ever invaded the land of our constitutional monarchy, or "crowned republic." Many a national eye has been furtively glanced at the favoured Isle, set like a gem in the ocean, but serious contemplation has always shown the madness of all schemes of conquest. Once, indeed, the Dutch fleet (June 10th, 1667,) sailed up the Thames as far as Tilbury Fort, destroyed Sheerness and some ships, but no troops were landed. Britain has not always thus been exempt from invasion. Previous to its becoming a monarchical institution race after race invaded it, colonised it, and was expelled from it by some new invader. The Britanni drove northward the aborigines, and the Romans subdued the Britanni; the Picts and Scots invaded and appropriated the possessions left by the Romans until they were driven back by the usurping Saxons, who in their time were harassed and temporarily subdued by the Danes; then came the last and greatest invasion, with its vast wars of civilisation and advancement. At the first Roman

invasion the Britanni inhabited the province of the *Brigantes*, in which Wigan was afterwards built. These were days of barter, when estates and wealth, according to modern ideas, were little valued. The very habits, character, and conduct of the people may be gathered from their current prices. A horse was worth half a dozen cows, whilst a trained hawk was worth a couple of good horses, and a sword worth a couple of hawks. No better description can be given of these rude forefathers than that of the Latin author, Dion Cassius. He says:—

“They never cultivate the land, but live on prey, hunting, and the fruits of trees; for they never touch fish, of which they have such prodigious plenty. They live in tents, naked, and without shoes; have their wives in common, and maintain all their children. The people share the government amongst them, and they practise robbery without restraint. They fight in chariots, having small, fleet horses; they have also infantry, who can run very swiftly, and while they stand are very firm. Their arms are a shield and a short spear, on the lower part of which is a bell of brass to terrify the enemy by its sound when shaken. They likewise wear daggers. They are accustomed to brave hunger, cold, and all kinds of toil; for they will continue several days up to their chins in water, and bear hunger many days. In the woods they live on bark and roots of trees. They prepare a certain kind of food for all occasions, a piece of which, of the size of a bean, prevents their feeling hunger or thirst.”

Thus at the beginning of the Christian era, when the “Good News” was first proclaimed on the plains of Palestine, our country was under the dominion of heathen mythology. When Christianity, having bid defiance to heathendom, was waging war in the civilised countries of the East, the few inhabitants of our almost unknown island were bowing their knees to idols. Long after the Roman Conquest Lancashire was inhabited by Druid Britons, who, clinging ardently to the most superstitious doctrines and traditions, believed in the transmigration of souls. Their priests were their despotic rulers, in whom they most piously confided. Their rites were of the most savage nature, for they believed that gods, like men, demand vengeance on the transgressor. Prisoners of war or criminals, and, when neither of these could be got, innocent persons were bound by them, placed in large cages of wickerwork, and burned as sacrifices to their gods. They were not sufficiently civilised to build towns for their social comfort, nor were they able to cultivate the fertile land. Their time was entirely devoted to indolence, hunting, fighting, and worshipping. There were vast forests, moors, and marshes, throughout the country, in which they spent their barbarous lives in hawking, or hunting the numerous bears, wolves, wild boars, and beavers. Their manner of living was little superior to that of the animals they hunted, and the best of their shelters, answering the purpose of houses, were not unlike the huts of the modern gipsies. They knew nothing of agriculture until taught the practice by the Romans, who over-ran nearly the whole country about the beginning of the Christian era. The Romans had discovered the wealth of the land, and being intent on possessing and using it they, according to the great

precept of the conquering Cæsar, made roads which, though expensive in construction, were considered the most practicable method of subduing a strange country, especially when rudely inhabited, as Britain then was. At the time of their invasion there were only twenty-eight British cities, which they connected by excellent roads. One of these twenty-eight cities was Winwick, then called, Cair-Guintguic, from which to Wigan traces of Watling street, or the old Roman road, marked by columns or milestones, have been discovered. In no document does the name of Wigan appear at this time, but, strange to say, when it does come into use long afterwards, another name of a very important town—Coccio, which answers in all respects to Wigan, and which some eminent antiquarians give good reasons for believing to have been Wigan—dies out. Coccio was long supposed to be Blackrod, which undoubtedly was on one of the Roman roads, but it was only a supposition, and the antiquarian researches of Mr. Sibson, and Mr. Thicknesse, M.P. for Wigan from 1847 to 1854, seem to prove beyond doubt that it was not Blackrod, but Wigan. Mr. W. Thompson Watkin, an eminent antiquarian, has given good reasons for holding a like belief. The main Roman road passing through Wigan was that from Chester and Warrington to the north. It passed on the east of Goose Green, by Robin Lane End, to the ford on the Douglas, near where Adam's Bridge now stands, and was really the only street in the town, being what is now called Wallgate, Market Place, and Standishgate; and then, instead of proceeding on the route of the modern Wigan Lane, turned westward through the Mesnes, along Beggar's Walk between Gidlow Lane and the Railway, and thence to Standish. The other Roman road from Manchester passed through Hindley, Amberswood Common, Hardybutts and Scholes, and crossed the river at the ford where Millgate begins, and where the Rector's water-mills stood. Near the latter ford was built the first Wigan bridge in the time of Edward III. The very existence of these roads in Wigan proves that it must have been a walled town even at this early period, for every Roman *iter* terminated at a walled station. Although both Standish and Blackrod have been considered by some to have been Roman stations, their claims can be established neither by relics nor records, whereas Wigan has clearly been proved to have been one, and an important one too. From the very circumstance of its having been a Roman station, the likelihood is that neither Blackrod nor Standish—both about three miles from Wigan—were stations, although they were undoubtedly on the Roman highway. The excellent papers on this subject given in the twentieth and twenty-eighth volumes of the "Archæological Journal" should be read by all who wish to follow more fully the researches on this subject. Wigan was the most important local town on the great Roman way, for surely the very existence of these Roman roads—now discovered—proves that it must have been

an important station. The remains of these roads, coming severally from Preston, Manchester, and Warrington, and meeting in Wigan, are still to be seen. Mr. Sibson says, "The great roads seem to have been about twelve yards in breadth and a yard in thickness. They were first formed with earth, about half a yard in thickness; the earth was generally covered with a stratum of large pieces of stone, a quarter of a yard in thickness, and the stones were then covered with a layer of gravel, about a quarter of a yard in thickness. When stones were scarce, and particularly when the ground was marshy, the road was formed wholly of earth and gravel." The town Winwick was the residence of Oswald, King of Northumbria, who was killed there whilst fighting against the Mercians in 642. Traces of the great Roman road from Winwick are still to be seen beyond Wigan, at Standish, on the one side, and near Ince on the other, and at Blackrod. The Blackrod portion was part of the direct road from Manchester and Ribchester, which joined the Wigan one. Afterwards another road was made from Manchester to Wigan, traces of which have also been recently discovered at the making of the new branch (Midland) railway. All Roman settlements would naturally be on the highway, and Wigan is proved to have been one of them; for surely antiquarian relics are more to be relied upon as historical guides than the mythical language, records or traditions of romancist authors, who wrote more to please the imagination than with a desire to relate facts. The archæological remains of Wigan relate a history uncoloured by fancy. It was certainly on the Roman highway, for portions of the highway exist and assert the fact. There was found treasure trove in the town in 1837, which clearly gives it a Roman connection. In clearing away some old stonework to make room for modern improvements, the workmen came upon a large collection of much defaced, but still clearly recognisable Roman coins of the reign of Probus, Victorinus, Gallienus, and Tetricus. Two Roman urns and many charred human bones were found near the present site of the Wigan Gas Works. Cremation was an honour bestowed only on the bodies of the great—a custom borrowed from the Romans and practised by the natives from the second to the fifth century. At the restoration of the Parish Church there was discovered a stone, now built into the splay of the tower window of that church, which is believed by antiquarians to be the remains of a Roman altar. (An old Roman altar, dedicated to Fortune by a centurion of a Roman legion, was discovered in Manchester in 1612). These discoveries themselves prove that Wigan must have been a Roman settlement, as it was the custom of the Romans to have at all their stations or settled colonies, and at them only, both a cemetery and a temple.

A stern, but useless opposition was made by the ancient Britons of Lancashire against the invasion and settlement of the Romans, who showed the natives no mercy when they defeated them, but cruelly bound them in the wicker-work cages prepared by

themselves for immolating the Romans in. Soon the Roman empire was assailed on the continent, and began to decline. The time for the Roman evacuation was at hand, but great progress had been made in civilising the primitive natives. About 418 A.D. the Roman troops finally left Britain, and the Picts and Scots immediately cast their covetous eyes on England, which they at once invaded with large depredating armies. Ruin, devastation, and desolation marked their progress. Gildas, the first British historian, who was born at Dumbarton, in Scotland, about 500 A.D., represents the Britons as thus bewailing their condition:—"The barbarians drive us to the sea, the sea drives us back to the barbarians. Thus, of two kinds of death, one or other must be our choice, either to be swallowed up by the waves, or butchered by the sword." Thus there was little peace in store for them. The fertility and wealth of the land had become known through the merchants, who had been induced by the Romans to carry on trade between the island and the continent. A new, but at first peaceful invasion, at the request of Vortigern, was made by the inhabitants of the Rhine—Jutes, Angles, and Saxons, the latter of whom divided the districts acquired afterwards by them into hundreds. These invaders were really the same in religion, language, manners, and customs. Vortigern had invited them, as mercenaries, to assist him against the continual harassing and vexatious invasions of the Picts and Scots from Scotland and Ireland. He treated them as good and worthy allies; but, seeing that the country had great natural wealth, and was pleasing in their eyes, they, by their craftiness, undermined his power, and soon became masters of the situation. The natives fought hard against their ever-growing power, and after a twenty years' war, provoked by the repeated attempts of the Britons to drive them out of the country, hope seemed to die out of the natives altogether, and the victorious Anglo-Saxons spread themselves all over the land, building rude towns, clearing forests, and cultivating the fields. They took possession of Lancashire, and circumvented the natives by their peaceful craft. They naturally explored the country, first along the existing Roman roads, on which, at convenient places, they settled and built hamlets. A body of these colonists settled on the Roman remains at Wigan, for, according to their experienced views, it was specially adapted for the site of a town. It was their custom, under such circumstances, to chose as a place of habitation a hill surrounded by valleys or low land, conveniently near a water supply, so that from this hill in the hollow they could not only obtain the elemental necessities of life, but be able on all sides to observe the approach of friend or foe. The old Roman camp on the Douglas, or Dhu-glas of the ancient Britons, on the mound-like hill on which the Parish Church of Wigan now stands, was thus the very place of their ideal choice. There they determined to settle, and first of all rudely fortified their little social colony, according to their wont, by digging trenches and throwing up earthwalls.

When they had thus fortified themselves against the attacks of marauders they immediately proceeded to erect a place of worship, for a church and fortifications were the foremost and greatest necessities of Saxon town building. They built on the present site of the Parish Church, and, doubtless, on the remains of the Roman temple, if not indeed on the site of the old Druid oak, a rude, but sacred building of wattlework, plastered with clay. Such was the first fortified or fighting town of that Saxon colony.

Having built their town, the likelihood is they would at once give it a name, and, although it is presumed that to them it was known to be the old Roman Coccio, they certainly did not give it that name, but, according to their custom, one compounded from their own language. There is always some definite reason for giving a special name to any place, but the names of many old towns, like their inhabitants and customs, have undergone such great changes that their origin cannot be traced. Many are so corrupted as to have no resemblance to the original, whilst many have been replaced by entirely new ones. The etymology and philology of the name "Wigan" are wrapt in much obscurity, indeed no authenticated reason can be given for its origin. Some plausible and many absurd reasons have been suggested, but the most probable hitherto advanced, and the most generally accepted as genuine, is that it is derived from the Saxon word "wig," meaning a fight, and that Wigan is simply the Saxon plural of that word. The local antiquarian discoveries and known history have suggested and favoured this hypothetical derivation, for sufficient human and horses' bones and implements of war have been found on its site to prove it to be the veritable graveyard of armies. If Arthur ever fought at Wigan, it must have been about the time that the Saxon colony settled there, but the untrustworthy historian, Nennius, only says, in reference to Arthur's battles:—"The second, third, fourth, and fifth happened at another river, called the Duggles, in the region named Linus." It is doubtful whether Arthur even existed, much more so is it doubtful whether he ever fought at Wigan. The Danes did fight there, and the "barrows" of bones found are most likely the remains of Dano-Saxon engagements. In all probability the Saxons named the town, and had good reasons for giving it its special name. I am disposed to think the termination *en* or *an* does not signify the plural of *Wig*. I think a much more plausible derivation than this is one which I have seen in an obsolete dictionary (Bailey's), where the original name is said to have been Pibiggin, derived from the Latin *Pi*, and changed by the Saxons to *Wi* and *biggin*, a building, and thus the name of the town meant really the sacred edifice itself, the habitations being merely attachments. It is no unusual thing for a town to receive the name of its church. Eccles simply means the church, while Ecclefeghan means the church on the

hill, and Pibiggin is reasonably supposed to be derived from the Saxon and Latin words, and originally applied to the house of worship.*

Camden thinks, from the diminutive appearance of the houses, although, I think they would not seem to be insignificant in the eyes of the native builders, that the name is a corruption of Weebiggin, or Little Buildings. The word biggin is a good, old, and not yet obsolete, provincial one. It is a most unlikely thing that the founders should mock their own handiwork with a name not untainted with ridicule. There are those who say that the name is derived from *wye*, a place of safety, and *gan*, to go to; giving at the same time plausible reasons for their suggestions or beliefs. That the whole name is but the plural of its first part is really the only derivation that receives serious consideration, and is generally believed to be the real one; but, with all due deference to those who hold that belief, I think it is not so. The town is of Saxon origin, was the site of a Saxon castle, fortifications, and church; and so the name, in all likelihood, would be a Saxon one, and doubtless the origin of the first part of the word is correctly given, as *wig*, a fight; but it is scarcely justifiable to say that *an* or *en* forms the plural. It seems strange, if this hypothesis be true, that Wigan should be the only one of all Saxon towns whose complete name is simply the plural of its part. The site of the future town was chosen by the colonists, because it was on the Roman road, because the remains of a town were already there, and, what they chiefly wished, because it was a hill in a hollow, fit to be fortified according to their notions. The Saxon experience was that all fortified places were fighting places, and, consequently, they expected Wigan to be a fighting town, and named it accordingly. In reading old books and manuscripts for this work I have found the name of the town spelt in a dozen different ways, all of which cannot be right, and, although "Wigan" may seem to this generation, from the custom of hearing it, the most euphonious, still it may not be nearest the original. All the spellings which I have seen begin with *Wig*, or *Wyg*, and undoubtedly the derivation is, so far, *Wyg*, a fight. One of the usual terminations which the Saxon name of a town bore was *ham*, and the Saxons, like too many of the modern English, were guilty of dropping their aspirates, and in the rubbing down process common to all growing

* The following description of the ancient arms of Wigan was recently lodged by Mr. Alderman Byrom in the Wigan Free Library, and published in the local newspapers:—"A church between two tall trees. On the reverse a crowned head (supposed to be Edward I.) In base a lion couchant between two acroets, anamallated (?). Dated 7 Henry VI., 1428." Mr. Rylands, F.S.A., of Warrington, gave excellent reasons for believing that Mr. Byrom was altogether mistaken. Each tree referred to, it is believed, is like the *ash*, the common provincial name for which is *Wiggin*, and, had antiquarians been reconciled to the description, and received it as genuine, in all likelihood a new derivation for the name of the town would have sprung up. People would have asked, "Was the name *Wigan* not originally applied to the church beside the Wiggin trees?"—D. S.

languages this termination would be pronounced without the *h*, and the *am* again corrupted to *an*. I have found the town casually named in letters written during the Commonwealth "Wigham," and I believe "Wigan," by the corruptions of civilisation, to be a mere refinement of "Wigham," which means the fighting place, hamlet, town, or borough. It is really the same as Wigton, or Wigtown. In the drama of *Palantoke* occurs the dialogue:—

Harold. Wer machte zum Statthalter dich in Wigan?
Swend. Du sandest mich nach Wigan und nach Schönen!
Harold. Who made thee chief in Wigan?
Swend. 'Twas thou didst send me forth to Wigan and to Schönen.

The origin given of names of places is not only sometimes very peculiar, but far-fetched and questionable; that of Winwick, with which the early history of Wigan is so closely connected, may be cited as an example. There, earnest labourers had just finished digging the foundation of their Parish Church, and retired for the night from their weary day's toil, when the inhabitants were startled by the unhappy squeaking of a pig. Heads appeared at every hole in the wall that answered for a window; still the pig screamed "We-ee-wick! We-ee-wick! We-ee-wick!" and then carried away a stone destined to form part of the church's foundation, and, laying it on the spot where King Oswald had fallen, again and again returned, squeaking "We-ee-wick," and bore back one stone more. The inhabitants were fully persuaded it was a Divine interposition, and, acting in accordance with their convictions, built their church where the pig carried the stones, and moreover from that day named their hamlet "We-ee-wick," which was afterwards refined, or corrupted, into "Winwick." The representation of a pig with a bell round its neck is, however, by no means a piece of ecclesiastical architecture confined to Winwick. A similar representation is generally found beside sculptures and paintings of St. Anthony, the patron of the lower animals and of bells and bell-towers. According to the traditional rhyming summary of Winwick history, both past and prospective, the parish is not one favourable to the fostering of virtue.

The Church at little Winwick,
 It stands upon a sod;
 And when a maid is married there,
 The steeple gives a nod.
 Alas! how many ages
 Their rapid flight have flown,
 Since on the high and lofty spire
 There's moved a single stone.

According to tradition, and some beliefs deduced from modern discoveries, King Arthur was the renowned hero of several sanguinary battles fought on the banks of the Douglas. It is a serious matter to disagree with historians, especially on a question

of such romantic interest, for it must be pleasant for all inhabitants of Wigan to believe that their town has such a worthy poetical connection. There is really no sufficiently authenticated reason for believing that either the noble Arthur, or any of his gallant knights, ever bathed their pilgrim feet in the limpid Douglas, or bared their swords on its grassy banks. All accounts of this Welsh favourite are of a romantic nature, and were neither written by "special correspondents" nor eye-witnesses, but are taken from mythical sources. No contemporary historian wrote of him, unless indeed, Gildas be Nennius. His history when recorded was a tradition, and almost every country has a similar mythical hero, just as all our most common tales and legends have their equivalents in other lands. Henricus and Ranulphus, after Nennius, are the two first chroniclers who record his glories, and the former lived about 300 years after his time, and the latter 800 years. Their information was culled from the interesting traditions of the Welsh bards, who from age to age had clothed their chronicles in more gorgeous garbs. The legends of the Morte d'Arthur of Sir Thomas Malory, of the 15th century, are as much to be relied upon, as historical facts, as their chronicles. Of course, whether Arthur ever lived, acted, and died, as he is recorded to have done, or not, his name will never die. Henricus and Ranulphus have written one sentence each, and in those two sentences lie Wigan's claims to an Arthurian connection. They are:—"In this year, which was the tenth year of Cerdicus, King of the West Saxons, arose among the Britons, in the eighteenth year of his age, the noble Arthur, who had twelve victories against the Saxons—the first on the river Gleny, then four on the river Douglas, which is in the region of Inees. That river is now called in English the Douglas (Duggles), and runs from the city of Wigan, being ten miles from the river Mersey, in the county of Lancaster."—(MSS., Harl, 2261.) The former of these two sentences was written by Henricus 300 years after the time of Arthur, and the writer of the latter, Ranulphus, of Chester, died in 1369. Where is the Gleny, the Douglas, or the region of the Inees? Nobody knows. The Douglas of Wigan is not the only Douglas. Many have written of King Arthur, but none have been able to say where the Gleny and the Douglas are; and even writers of the twelfth century confess they are unable to find out by searching whether this Douglas is in Lothian, Lancashire, or Cornwall. The Arthurian claims of Wigan are, therefore, feeble and can scarcely be considered reliable.

Arthur was a veritable Samson, according to the unauthenticated traditions handed down concerning him, and seemingly nothing, either in verse or prose, can be said of him which is either too good or too great. In the times of Vortigern, who invited the Saxons to this country, he, according to his admiring chroniclers, not only distinguished himself in single combat, but frequently also against dreadful odds. Now he felled this knight to the ground with one dread swoop of his

battle-axe; now clove that hero in two. His name was the terror and pride of the land. He issued from his fortified castle to meet distinguished knights who had travelled far to openly defy him in his own domains, simply to have their prowess tried against his. He wandered abroad in search of adventure, did battle against knights who were rumoured to have carried off some maiden fair, or led his invincible armies against national foes. He lived in times when war was the business of all men and the admiration of all women. Then, Might was Right, and even the most civilised nations were but barbarians. When there were no national foes to fight, it seemed to men there was no object to live for, and, as if to keep themselves in good practice, families, clans, towns, and counties warred one against the other, for the mere pleasure of fighting. Even the priests themselves attended the battle-field, armed with clubs, to beat out men's brains with, for it was sinful for such orthodox men to shed men's blood by the sword. Then, every man of power was a tyrant, whose serfs were proud to fall prostrate at his feet and own him for their lord. Robber-chiefs were local kings, who ruled with a rod of iron, and carried on war on their own account. The natives of Britain warred against each other, until, weakened by their internecine conflicts, their invited allies, the Saxons, quietly took possession of the land. In Wigan, as elsewhere in the county, great struggles were made by the enfeebled nations for supremacy, but the Saxons foiled their efforts, and, thus subdued, their hopes decayed until the renowned Arthur, according to tradition, roused their downcast spirits from a lethargy of despair. In all his battles Arthur is said to have carried on his shield the image of the Virgin in which he idolatrously placed implicit confidence. Many of the Britons had already become the willing slaves of the Saxons, working in their fields without the town, and living in their houses within it, for those who cultivated the fields by day returned to the town for safety by night. These slaves of Wigan, and the natives of the surrounding neighbourhood, are represented as being roused to arms at the command of the great Arthur, about 520 A.D. His brother-in-law, Uriens, the Lancashire hero, one of the knights of his round table, figures conspicuously in the mythical history. After his wife had failed to assassinate him in a fit of jealousy, he fell by the hand of another assassin, and received honourable burial, whilst his glorious brother-in-law, not even receiving the common rites of burial, and without even having had his brave deeds recorded by chroniclers of his day, came to a mythical end. Contemporaries forgot him, but future historians have written about him so elaborately as to leave nothing untold, except the truth. Those who wish to believe the traditionary romance should read Nennius, Henricus, Ranulphus, and Sir Thomas Malory.

In the sixth century, a young man of quick mercantile ability endeared himself to, and married, the rich widow of his employer, and so became possessed of all her worldly

goods. For some years he continued his mercantile career, and then retired from public life, and, notwithstanding his wealth and former business habits, lived after the manner of the Hebrew Essenes. Some said he was mad; others that he was the prophet of God. In a few years the traditions of his devotees proved him to many to be Mohammed, the true prophet of God; and his gorgeous temples now number tens of thousands, whilst his followers are innumerable. About the very time his religion was springing into existence, fanatic idolaters were waging bitter war against Christianity in the vicinity of Wigan. Religion has brought about more bloodshed than all other causes of war together. The heathen have at all times proved themselves as zealous enthusiasts for the defence of their paganisms as the most devoted Christians have for their creeds. The first religious wars in Lancashire, where Christianity was concerned, took place in the middle of the seventh century. In 597 the Roman missionaries, as related in connection with the tale of the Angles, or Angels, were well received by the king and people, and the benign influences of Christianity were soon felt all over the land; but a reaction set in in the north of England when Edwin was king of Britain, from his northern borough town (Edwin's burgh or Edinburgh) to Chester. Edwin was slain at the beginning of the outbreak of fanaticism at Hatfield in 633, and the war was continued by his successor, Oswald, who, when a youthful exile, had found refuge with the missionaries of Iona, and was converted by them. One of his first regal acts was to send there for missionaries, the first of whom, in hopeless despair, returned to his monastery with the intelligence that the people of Lancashire were so stubborn and barbarous as to make the introduction of Christianity an impossibility. Such was the unflattering account taken back of the Lancashire bigoted Pagans. But the monks, holy and hopeful men, blamed the severity of their unsuccessful brother more than the ignorant stubbornness of the natives, and another attempt was made with great success. The chief monk Aidan, who next came as missionary, wandered from town to town through Chester, Wigan, and all Yorkshire and Northumbria, with the good king as his interpreter. The hospitable King Oswald, who often gave the viands on his own table to the numerous poor at his gates, devoted his life to the harassing battles of the Cross, and fell at last in the great cause on the battlefield near Maserfield, when fighting against Penda, the defender and champion of Paganism (642). About 300 years after this, the doctrines of Christianity having been generally accepted, a copy of the Anglo-Saxon bible was placed in every church, having been translated by the king's order into the native tongue. Wigan was a very extensive parish, and in its church would, no doubt, be placed the sacred book in the native tongue, which could only be read by the priests to the poor parishioners who were eager for the gospel news.

The Danes, pirates of the seas and robbers of nations, invaded England at the end of the eighth century, and for a hundred years, during many invasions, they ravaged the land, destroyed towns, laid waste fortifications, and carried off everything of any value, neither too big nor too heavy. Their visits caused a revolution. The quiet agricultural progress of the inhabitants was arrested, and life and property became so uncertain and unsafe that laws were disregarded, and perfect anarchy reigned until the time of Alfred the Great, who wrought such marvellous changes in the conduct of the people and the government that dishonesty seems literally to have been frightened out of the country. Of all towns taken and ravaged by these Danes none suffered more than Chester, which, after they left the country, was virtually a walled city without an inhabitant. One of the excellent highways of the country passed through Wigan to Chester, and thus the invaders in all likelihood despoiled Wigan, as well as other places, especially as it was a fortified town and lay on their route. So great were the depredations and destruction of these Northmen that, among many other contingent taxes, one had to be levied for the restoration of the castles and town walls destroyed by them, and such a terror had they become to the country that the inhabitants willingly paid their Dane-gold, or tax of Ethelred the Unready, to buy them off. The three most important taxes imposed in Wigan and other large towns at this time were, one for the repairs of highways and bridges (although there was no bridge at Wigan, for the Douglas was forded there then, and for centuries after), one for the maintenance of the army, and another for the repairs and restoration of towns, castles, and town walls.

A stubborn resistance was everywhere offered to the Danes, and they showed an equal determination to conquer. They were attacked by the inhabitants of the walled towns, for the men in these—and sometimes the women, too—were trained to arms from youth. In every probability several engagements must have been fought in the neighbourhood of Wigan, some of which local wars were those which are generally ascribed to Arthur. Wigan must have been one of the most important military stations on the great Roman road, which the Danes undoubtedly traversed on their way to Chester; and can it be supposed that, contrary to all Danish characteristics, they laid waste with fire and sword all other towns and yet passed the fortifications of Wigan unmolested? The buried bones that have been exhumed from local "barrows" must be the remains of Saxon and Danish opponents, and the blood that is said by old chroniclers to have dyed the Douglas for several days during the Arthurian battles is likely to have been that of the Danes and Saxons, who fell during the engagements which took place in the ninth century.

The Danes had destroyed many of the fortifications of Lancashire, but Edward the Elder took a very great interest in restoring and repairing what they had

overthrown. Several of these towns the king himself visited in 923, and the repairs of Manchester and Thilwell are specially mentioned, but as he and his father were constantly building and repairing in the neighbourhood, Wigan was doubtless one of the other towns attended to by his orders. The beneficial influences of Christianity were making marked effects on the progress and manners of the people. They had become, comparatively speaking, extensive cultivators of the soil, and, indeed, exported much grain to the continent. Cheese was also largely exported. Agriculture was the favourite pursuit of the better classes, who all had several slaves in their service. Nomadic habits had given place to those of social settlement. There were many improvements in the dwellings. The houses of Wigan were of a more solid and substantial nature. At first they were but rudely thatched, gipsy-like, huts, with holes in the walls for windows, and an opening in the roof for a chimney, whereas the gentry now lived in wooden edifices. Families, slaves, and dogs lived and fed in the same house and room. Swine's flesh was the chief food at dinner—an early meal—after which it was not unusual for all to get drunk, especially the clergyman if he happened to be present. The men were soldiers in times of war, and hunters, or cultivators of the field, in times of peace. Ladies were expert at needlework, and generally wove all the cloth and made all the clothes. The rude church was adorned with modern sculptures or pictures, not for the remotest purposes of idolatry, but simply as modest means of enlightening ignorant people, for priests only could read. Unfortunately, nothing further has been recorded concerning Wigan at this period except that it was visited in 923, like other neighbouring towns, by a storm that seemed to the inhabitants to be another Deluge. Great progress had been made in agriculture, and the people were entirely dependent on the produce of the land, which, being virgin soil, required no skilled or scientific management, but simply ploughing and casting in of the seed, to insure a manifold crop; but in this disastrous year the crops were destroyed. The destruction of these easily-gained crops meant that the inhabitants were deprived of their national food and brought to the very verge of famine. The yeomen of the town, or those who had acquired a lease of patches of ground from the lord of the manor, were impoverished and their slaves and dependents reduced to starvation. Disease and death followed the famine, and the better classes had to resort to, and wholly depend on, their hunting. This was but one of the many plagues and famines in which Wigan was destined to participate. It seemed to foretell that her whole career would be chequered, as some youthful ailments certainly retard the healthy growth, and leave their effects clinging to a long, sickly, life. Desolation and despair reigned in her streets during every national plague, and she had special visitations that brought short-lived agony, and almost certain death to many, often leaving the survivors in reckless despair, as men, who, looking upon their

yawning graves without seeing any hope beyond, eagerly devour the mad, insatiable pleasures that are momentarily presented to them. Such insanity of despair as is begotten by dearth of food, and, seemingly, the inevitable certainty of death, have developed such orgies in her midst that religion has held its breath at the daring of frenzied humanity, whilst men of sober thinking have marvelled at the stupendous sacrileges committed by Christian men and women. At the end of the sixteenth century Wigan was frequently the house of lamentation and woe, and in 1648 the desolations of war were added to the ravages of famine and pestilence. Often have oriental pests laid a large percentage of her inhabitants in early graves, and, worst of all, the scarcity of work for able and willing hands has frequently visited upon her the most cruel distress. But of these and many others, with their accepted lessons of wisdom, which she has overcome and survived, mention will be made in due order.

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CHAPTER II.

Norman Conquest—Roger de Poictou—Wigan and the Domesday Book—Local Saxon Families—Wigan now and then—Records of Out-townships—The Conqueror in the North—Slave Trade—Blank in Wigan's History.

HERE are strange coincidences in the histories of men and nations. Man goes through his cycles of change and decay, and so do nations, although, in both cases, many nations and men disappear without reaching maturity. The mutability even of nature, from youth to old age, has many marked stages. Impetuous youth is far more severe with human failings than sedate old age. The trials and experience of active life smooth the ruffled tempers and dispel melancholy, as the ever restive ocean smooths the rugged rocks into symmetrical pebbles. Internecine and foreign wars have been the fierce agents of civilisation in bringing countries to national eminence. As change of habit often changes a man's countenance, so do the rapid strides of civilisation change the manners, customs, and even physical appearance of a country. A small accident, or an insignificant incident, often changes a man's career, and the success or failure of a policy may increase, or mar, the glories of a kingdom. There are few old men, successful or otherwise, who cannot look back upon some special turning point in their career. So, too, there are eras in a nation's history, and the most marked epoch in the youth of our country is the Norman Conquest.

One of the most distinguished generals at the battle of Hastings, in 1066, was Roger de Poictou, the Conqueror's cousin, who gallantly led the centre division of the Norman hosts. To the faithful Normans were given the estates of defeated Saxons. To Roger de Poictou, for his military daring and success, were given no less than 398 manors, in different parts of the country, one of which was Newton, in which Wigan was situated. He had been faithful to the Duke, and he himself had many such followers equally anxious and deserving to share the spoil, and as he could afford to give great rewards he bestowed the barony of Newton on his faithful friend and follower, Warinus Banastre. Unfortunately, De Poictou, so richly rewarded, was

unfaithful to his king during the Saxon rebellions, and for his misconduct was deprived of his baronies, so that the estates of Newton became the king's property, although Banastre still retained them as Baron. The result of this disloyalty was that Wigan was not mentioned in the celebrated Domesday Book, because the king held all the lands between the Ribble and the Mersey, the value of which was given, according to the custom of inquiring about royal demesnes, without specially naming all the divisions and subdivisions. The value of all this land taken from De Poitou, from the Ribble to the Mersey, is stated in the Domesday Book to be £120, and if £1 then were reckoned as worth £120 now, its value in present money would only have been £14,400; yet, when the property tax existed in 1814, the same land was valued at £2,569,761, showing an increased value of £2,555,361. Upholland and Orrell were not in the Newton barony, and have the distinguished honour of being mentioned in Domesday Book. Banastre, the patron of Wigan, was a second-rate baron, or baron of the county, holding his barony from another at a nominal fee. In the reign of William II. the confiscated estates were again given to Poitou, with the hope that he might espouse the cause of the usurper, which he did; but on the death of Rufus he declared for the real heir, Robert, against the recognised king, Henry, for which he was again deprived of all his estates, and banished in 1101, and the Banastres became chief barons, under De Musli and Greslet, and were succeeded by the family of Langton in the reign of Edward I.

At this epoch of English history many new families settled in the neighbourhood of Wigan, as well as in other parts of the kingdom. Estates were taken from the Saxons and given to the Normans, who sold part of their possessions to Normans or Saxons who were willing to pay. In a few instances estates were given back to Saxon holders who gave proof of their adherence to the king. Such was the case with the old Saxon family of Bradshaigh. There also settled on the estates of Haigh and Blackrod, shortly after this, the Norries or Norrys, after whom came the Bradshaighs by the marriage of Mabella Norries, heiress of her father's vast estates, to Roger Bradshaigh, and then again by marriage Haigh came into the possession of the present honourable family of Crawford or Lindsay. Albert Gredle, the third Baron of Manchester, whose name, by the way, is spelled in thirty-four different ways, gave one knight's fee or six caracutes in Dalton, Parbold, and Wrightington, to Orm (whose name is still preserved in Ormskirk, Ormeslaw, Ormsher), son of Ailward, when he married his daughter Emma early in the Norman period. Because of the possession of this property Orm would have to provide one juryman to attend the assize court at Lancaster. The fourth Baron Gredle gave three caracutes to Thomas Perpoint, in Rivington, and for ten shillings he gave two caracutes in Heaton to William Norres, who was doubtless connected with the Norries of Haigh. The

same baron sold two oxgangs of land for three shillings to Henry of Lathom. A caracute was as much as could be tilled in one year by one plough and extended to eight bovates or oxgangs, an oxgang being thirteen acres.

The law of primogeniture was not so sternly severe on younger sons then as now. All entailed estates which had come to the father as eldest son were the legal inheritance of the eldest son, but those which came into the family as part of the dowry of the mother were the legal possessions of the second son. The other sons were generally allowed to struggle for possessions and distinctions for themselves, and because they inherited no property were customarily called "Sansterre," for which reason, too, King John received that ill-omened surname long before he lost his French possessions. The Standish estates belonged to Warin Bussel, the Baron of Penworth, but when his daughter was married to Richard Spilman she received the Standish Hall estates as part of her dowry. Their eldest son inherited the entailed estates of Spilman, but the second son, who was called Standish, received the Standish estates, which had been his mother's dowry. He was the first of the Standish family.

The Saxons divided their districts into hundreds, and Wigan was situated in the hundred of West Derby and barony of Newton, but as it is not specially mentioned in the Domesday Book, Beaumont's translation concerning the whole district may be here stated:—"The whole manor, with the hundred of Blackburn, yielded the king a rent of thirty-two pounds and two shillings. Roger de Poitou gave all the land to Roger de Busli and Albert Greslet, and there are so many more who have eleven caracutes and a half, to whom they have granted freedom for three years, wherefore it is not now valued."

The great barony of Newton was not actually brought to the hammer, like many valuable estates of ancient and noble families, but was disposed of by private bargain in 36 Elizabeth (1549) for £1000. The advowson of the different parishes, however, was withheld. In the indenture tripartite it is distinctly stated that from sale are excepted the advowson of the Rectory of Wigan, and all the messuages, enclosed lands, tenements, meadows, and grounds belonging thereto.

In clear weather an extensive and pleasant view may be obtained from the Parish Church tower; yet, although the contour lines of the surface of the earth are but slightly changed, the difference of scenery between this period of the borough's history, and that of the nineteenth century, is very great. A few straggling houses of very primitive construction, in close proximity to the church, was the town. Those on the south-east side of the church and south side of the Roman road were chiefly occupied by yeomen and their slaves; those on the north-west, or Hallgate, were inhabited by the retainers and slaves of the rector; a few houses on the western

slopes, by the side of the Roman road, were tenanted by yeomen and tradesmen, whose lands, in size like Irish farms, lay westward of the town; a few houses in Millgate and Standishgate completed the town. Every man's cottage could not be said to be his castle, for it would have been an easy matter to storm and take it. The walls of the town, and the united strength of the inhabitants, were the bulwarks in which they put their trust. On the sacred precincts was the churchyard, in which the already ancient rude forefathers of the town lay, whilst over the beds in which their unconscious bodies rested stray, burghers' swine burrowed the ground or roughly cropped the rank grass, in the absence of the burleyman. Within a few yards of the consecrated ground, on the southern side, was the widened part of the old Roman way, which might be seen stretching away westward, with winding gracefulness, over the ford and into the forest. About a hundred yards eastward the sister Roman road from Manchester met this westward one from Chester. From the church to where these roads met, with the fields sloping from the Market-place to the wall at the Mesnes, was an open space, or common ground, on which the rector allowed his burghal tenants to graze their swine and cattle. Where the two roads met, and almost on the site of the present Royal Hotel, stood for centuries after the old ale-house. There were no carriages to wear away these well-made roads, and from the mere want of use even traces of them were beginning to disappear in many places. Travellers either proceeded on foot or on horseback, and the appearance of a stranger was certain to bring out the whole staring and wondering population. On every side was to be seen a vast, undulating forest, with patches cleared here and there for purposes of farming. From a bosky glen in the east, lying under the wooded heights of Haigh, issued the clear Douglas, and glided murmuringly along the eastern valley, with its long southern and gently sloping fertile fields, and then was quickly lost in the great forest of the west, that seemed to cover the whole space as far as the modern Ashurst Beacon. On the highway in the north might be seen the Parish Church of Standish, with its hamlet around. Now the scene is different; instead of forests of trees, and little farms ill-tilled, with a clear stream running through the vast undulating plain, and a few scattered houses for a town, with a solitary church standing in its centre, there is a thickly-populated district, with a great filthy river-drain running through its midst. There are now (1881) 290 streets in the borough (which covers 2,188 acres), a population of 48,192, whilst in the Wigan Union (covering 48,396 acres) there are 139,867 inhabitants. In the Borough there are 6,097 Parliamentary, and 6,949 Municipal, voters. Factory chimneys are more numerous than remaining old trees; mills, pits, foundries, and engineering establishments teem with industrious thousands who "earn whate'er they can." Instead of a great slave population there are over a score of cotton factories,

and thousands of fairly intelligent men and women working, at the most, ten hours a day in these busy hives of local industry. The pattering *music* of such an array of feet in Flemish clogs alarms and arouses the stranger from his morning slumber, and amuses him on the return at night as the intelligent eyes beam from the happy countenances peering from the shawl-covered heads. Thousands of men, of blackened countenances, determined wills, and callous looks, yet with honest and genial hearts, and uncouth, obliging manners, mostly sharing in the elective franchise, supply us with the comforts of home from the bowels of the earth. Engineering establishments provide an abundance of remunerative work to the skilled artisan, and prosperous tradesmen supply the wants of all. All professions and creeds are well represented. There are numerous churches, chapels, and schools, a public park, and institutions affording opportunities for self-culture. Of public buildings there are yet few, but such as do exist are excellent. Everywhere there are signs of unmistakeable prosperity and contentment; but the rise, establishment, and progress of all burghal prosperities will be noticed in detail in chronological order. The denizens of the vast neighbouring forests were wild boars, wild cattle—ancestors of the present Chillingham breed—wolves, foxes, and deer. These were more carefully protected by the forest laws than the inhabitants were by their charters. Fine, mutilation, and death were the punishments for breaking these laws, and the barons, who had the power of hanging and drowning, were not slow to execute the laws. In 1286 no less than forty-eight persons were arraigned before the Lancaster assize court for killing and taking deer, but fines and imprisonment were the only punishments inflicted. In the time of Henry VII. two members of the Boteler (Butler) family, of Bewsey, Warrington, were tried at the assize for slaughtering two wild bulls. The last wild boar in the county was said to have been killed by the Earl of Lancaster, John of Ghent, son of Edward III.

It may be mentioned here that there are more authenticated deeds about Hindley and some of the out-townships relating to early history than for Wigan itself. The Hindley deeds have been printed by John Leyland, Esq., of the Grange, Hindley, and of themselves afford sufficient matter for writing an interesting history, but to write of them fully here would only be to swell these pages without doing justice to Hindley, and therefore Hindley and other townships will only be mentioned when their history directly concerns Wigan, the mother parish.

It took seven years of hard labour before William could justly claim the title of Conqueror. The south and east willingly submitted, but Mercia and Northumbria refused. The friendships of nations vacillate like those of individuals. A nation that is now a faithful ally may be in the next generation a deadly foe. Before the Conquest the Saxons would have done anything to drive the Danes out of the

country, but after the Conquest they humbly besought their assistance, which was given in a most substantial way, with the ulterior intention, undoubtedly, of being themselves the lords of the island. With the Danish assistance the whole of the north and west rose in rebellion, and William swore "by the splendour of God" to take a terrible revenge. He did so, and shared the suffering himself. The whole district of York was laid waste and the harvests destroyed, and, as a natural consequence, famine ensued. His own soldiers were so dreadfully overcome by hunger and fatigue that the mercenary part of them demanded a release from their obligation, which he scornfully granted, whilst the other portion of them was so reduced as to be thankful to have an opportunity of killing and eating the horses. He marched from York to Chester, and would certainly march through Wigan. So very severe was the winter during his march that the roads were in many places blocked by snow-drifts, and the Douglas and other minor rivers swollen into great and rapid torrents. The natives rejoiced at his difficulties and mutinies, and trusted that the elements were working for the destruction of a foe whom they feared. He erected numerous castles to defend the districts he had so dearly bought. He broke up the great earldoms into smaller estates, which he bountifully gave to his faithful followers, who had each to kneel before him and humbly vow, "I become liege man of yours for life and limb and earthly regard, and I will keep faith and loyalty to you for life and death; God help me." Thus, too, each under-tenant swore to his superior, and so, by this feudal system of military tenure throughout all England, there was an army ready to rise at the king's command.

At this period, and for centuries after, slavery was quite a recognised trade in the country. Englishmen and English children brought a high price in the foreign market. Pope Gregory was so well pleased with the appearance of several youthful English slaves in the markets of Rome, that he inquired kindly of the owners from whence they came; and when he was told they were heathen Angles, from the country of Deiri, and subjects of King Alla, he replied, "These Angles, angel-like, should be delivered from (*De*)ira, and taught to sing *Allalulia*." In Wigan and other towns children were bought or kidnapped, carried to the slave market towns, of which Bristol was the chief, and then transported by professional traders to other countries. Liverpool was not yet even a parish, much less a slave town. William the Conqueror, however, made this slave trade illegal, although it still clandestinely flourished. But surely no kind of slavery could be worse than that which was sought to be placed on poor idle beggars by an Act passed in 1547 to suppress vagabondage. Thus ran the law:—"All former Acts against vagabonds and sturdy beggars being repealed, it is provided that every man or woman, not being prevented from working by old age, lameness, or disease, who shall be found

loitering or wandering, and not seeking work, during three days, or shall leave work when engaged, may be lawfully apprehended and brought before two justices of the peace; who, upon confession, or on the proof of two witnesses, shall immediately cause the said loiterer to be marked with a hot iron on the breast, the mark being V, and adjudge the said person living so idly to his apprehender to be his *slave*." The apprehender was "to have and hold the *slave* for two years; and only giving him bread and water and refuse food, to cause the said *slave* to work, by boating, chaining, or otherwise, at such labour, how vile soever it be, as he should put him unto." If, on again running away, the slave was apprehended and convicted, the punishment was increased. He was to be branded on the forehead or cheek with the letter S, and condemned to life-long servitude with his apprehender, or he might be sold to anyone who would "starve, chain, and beat him according to the tenour of this statute."

The first part of Wigan's history can only be written from relics, and a dubious sentence in Arthurian history; but from the time of the Conqueror to the thirteenth century there is but a long blank of conjecture, with a few stones of Norman architecture that remain, like solitary historical sentinels of the period. It is the last great blank, but it is justifiable to say that, even in that time, it was a town in a very prosperous state, for when it is next mentioned it is said to be one of the opulent and influential towns of England. From the thirteenth century there is a chain of evidence which, when followed up, reveals its history from then to the present day, a period of six centuries. That history is gathered from local references in other authenticated old histories, old documents lately published, or for the first time publicly appearing in these pages, from charters, letters, registers, and the churchwardens' accounts, &c.

Among the most influential local families of this early period were those of Norrrys, Winstanley, Worsley, Standish, Banastre, Gerard, Farington, &c. Edmund de Winstanley, in 1239, married one of the Standishes, and was also connected with the Worsleys of Worsley.

Farmers, and not farmers only, are always growling and grumbling about the weather, and wishing for the good old seasons; but how would they like a repetition of seasons as thus chronicled:—In 1086 a very heavy season, and a swinkful and sorrowful year in England in murrain of cattle, and corn and fruits were at a standstill, and so much untowardness in the weather as a man may not easily think; because of the badness of the weather 1087 was a very heavy and pestilential year in this land, in winter there was so great a famine over all England that many men died a miserable death through hunger; 1089 was a very late year in corn and every kind of fruits, so that many men reaped their corn about Martinmas

and yet later; 1095 was very unseasonable, in consequence of which throughout all this land were all the fruits of the earth reduced to a moderate crop; 1096 was a heavy-tryed year through all England, both through the manifold tributes and also through the heavy-tryed hunger that sorely oppressed this earth; in 1097 a very heavy-tryed year in all things, and beyond measure laborious for badness of weather, both when men attempted to till the soil, and afterwards to gather the fruits of their tilth; 1098 was a very troublesome year through manifold impositions, and from the abundant rains that ceased not all the year, nearly all the tilth in the marsh lands perished; 1103 was a calamitous year, murrain of cattle and scarcity of crops. The chronicler depicts almost every year up to 1131 as being a repetition of famine and murrain, and yet there was less grumbling than there is now with the advantages of sanitation and drainage.

CHAPTER III.

The Rectors of Wigan—John de Mansel—The King—Primitive Burgesses of Wigan—The Church—Wakes—Prices—Customs—Fairs—Guilds—Trial by Jury—Burleymen—Local Self-Government—First Royal Charter—Frankpledge—Wigan Streets—Church Bell—First Burghal Charter—State of Trade—Livings of de Mansel—Cotton and Linen Trade—Ince—Difficulties and end of De Mansel: His Character, by Matthew Paris.

THE Rectors of Wigan must have been born under lucky stars, for when men once obtained that rural living, it generally proved but an adjunct to others. Yet, how different, and often indifferent, were their characters. Some were philosophical divines, others psychological guessers, some scientific dabblers, others distinguished *literati*. Some were most enthusiastic bigots, while others were most pliable latitudinarians, and not a few were hard students, seeking fortune and fame; but in one peculiarity there was uniformity; they were all, in olden times, pluralists. Temporal necessities were first served, as they were of the first importance. The battle-field was the road to glory, and the Church was the sure path to wealth, the desire for which grows stronger with every new possession. No wonder, then, that clerical ambition soared not to the cross and crown, but to society and lucre. No wonder the tastes of the age were studied and fostered by future rectors and bishops. Preferments were seldom given for zeal in visiting the poor, the fatherless and widows in affliction, but rather were the first-fruits of a glib tongue and sycophantic manner in the mediæval drawing-room. As education spread, the human failings of bishops and priests became a part of the popular knowledge, and, human-like, they and their offices were equally condemned because they were considered inseparable, and new philosophies of freer thought, new sects and creeds sprang up, so much so that the simple apostolic doctrine first introduced into England was divided into over a hundred sects, while many believed that all creeds were unreasonable, misleading, and wrong. The church was supposed to be crumbling into ruins through exposure and neglect; but in all ages there have been and will be pessimists who lament the degeneracy of all things in their own time, and bewail the irreparable loss of the golden past.

Date of Institution.	Rectors.	On whose Presentation.	Cause of Vacancy.
Before 1245...	John de Mansel.		
1299-1300...	Pympton (?)		
Sept. 22, 1303...	Robert de Cliderhou ...	John de Langeton.	
1309...	Richard Fulshagh (?)		
June 15, 1334...	John de Langton ...	Robert de Langeton ...	Death of Robert de Cliderhou.
1344...	John de Craneno ...	Ditto.	
April 26, 1349...	John de Winwick ...	Edward III.	
	Henry de Chaddesden...	Held for John de Winwick during some litigation; died 1354.	
July 10, 1359...	Richard de Langeton ...	Robert de Langeton.	
Sept. 4, 1359...	Rob. de Lostock ...	Ditto ...	Resignation of Richard de Langeton.
Jan. 4, 1361...	Walter de Campeden ...	John, Earl of Lancaster (minority of Ra. Langton)	Resignation of Robert de Lostock.
Aug. 24, 1370, } and was living } in 1400	James de Langeton ...	Ralph de Langeton ...	Death of Walter de Campeden.
1441...	James Lanton (?)		
Aug. 9, 1503...	Thomas Langton ...	Trustees of another Ralph, deceased.	
Aug. 16, 1506...	Rich. Wiot (or Wyett) ...	Henry VII., by minority of Thos. Langton, son and heir of Ralph ...	Death of Thomas Langton.
Oct. 10, 1519...	Thomas Lynacre, M.D. ...	Thomas Langton ...	Resignation of Richd. Wiot.
Aug. 8, 1543...	Richard Langton	Thomas White.	
	Richard Kyghley ...	Ditto ...	Death of Richd. Kyghley.
	John Harbert...	Ditto ...	Ditto.
	Richd. Smyth ...	Edward, Earl of Derby, by grant of Thos. Langton, Kt.	Death of Richd. Smyth.
March 2, 1554...	Richard Gerard ...		
Aug. 9, 1558...	Thomas Stanley, Bishop of Sodor and Man ...	John Fleetwood and Peter Farington, patrons for this turn on the grant of Sir Thomas Langton, Knt. ...	Death of last Incumbent.
Feb. 8, 1571...	Edward Fleetwood ...		Resignation of last Incumbent.
Oct. 1604...	[Bryan Vincente]		
Oct. 12, 1604...	Gerrard Massie ...	King James.	
1615...	John Bridgeman (afterwards Bishop of Chester).		
About 1645...	James Bradshawe...		Sequestration of Dr. Bridgeman.
	Chas. Hotham (ejected 1662)		Removal of Bradshaw for not observing the Parliamentary Fast, 1st June, 1650.
1662...	Geo. Hall, Bishop of Chester	Sir Orlando Bridgeman ...	Ejection of Charles Hotham.
1668...	John Wilkins, do.	Trustees of ditto ...	Death of Bishop Hall.
1672...	John Pearson, do.	Ditto ...	Death of Bishop Wilkins.
1686...	Thos. Cartwright, do.	Ditto ...	Death of Bishop Pearson.
1689...	Nicholas Stratford, do.	Ditto ...	Death of Bishop Cartwright.
1700...	Edward Finch.		
April 30, 1714...	Samuel Aldersey ...	Sir John Bridgeman, Wm., Lord Digby, and Orlando Bridgeman, Esq. ...	Resignation of Edward Finch
May 12, 1740...	Roger Bridgeman...	Sir John Bridgeman, Bart., and Wm., Lord Digby ...	Death of Samuel Aldersey.
July 9, 1750...	Shirley Coates ...	Ditto ...	Death of Roger Bridgeman.
July 30, 1776...	Guy Fairfax ...	Sir Henry Bridgeman...	Death of Shirley Coates.
July 30, 1790...	George Bridgeman ...	Sir Henry Bridgeman, Richd. Hopkins, and John Heaton	Cession of Guy Fairfax.
Feb. 26, 1801...	Hon. Geo. Bridgeman...	Orlando, Lord Bradford, Hon. J. Simpson, & Hinton	Cession of Geo. Bridgeman.
Jan. 4, 1833...	Henry John Gunning...	Earl of Bradford ...	Death of Hon. G. Bridgeman.
1864...	Hon. G. T. O. Bridgeman...	Ditto ...	Resignation of Sir H. J. Gunning, Bart.

All Europe had been the slave of tyrannical Papacy. Money was drawn from our already impoverished country to fill the coffers, and minister to the unrestrained licentiousness, of Rome. The drunken priests at home spent their time in taverns and at gaming tables, and, being the only men of letters of the age, bishops and deans were drawn from their livings and appointed as judges, ministers, and ambassadors; and the Church thus being left, like a flock without shepherds, her parishes and livings were, not unusually, filled by royal favourites, who knew nothing about, and cared less for, ecclesiastical matters. Many benefices were thus bestowed on favourite laymen, and one of the most fortunate of these royal favourites, not a layman, but divine, was John Mansel, of Wigan. He was a descendant of Phil. de Mansel, who came over with the Conqueror. He was a sound divine and worthy master of Queen's College, Cantab, and a general scholar in all literature.

From the very first, King Henry III. had given great dissatisfaction on account of his prevailing tendency to favouritism. His own subjects were despised and ridiculed, whilst foreigners were confided in and enriched. The more the natives were provoked at his kindly treatment of aliens, with the more infatuation did he favour them, until his originally weak will was brought altogether under foreign control. He had despised and lost the affections of his people, so he sought the favour of continental rulers, and even of petty chiefs. If any rapacious adventurer asked his assistance he at once, at the expense of his already overtaxed subjects, sent them armed forces, in return for which he was quite pleased to receive nothing more than conventional flattering thanks. By this means and the exactions of the Popes, half the money was taken out of England, for which there was neither moral nor commercial return. Often he overtaxed his people unconstitutionally, and begged benevolences to pay for a bubble reputation on the continent. The subjects of the Emperor Frederic II. were in rebellion, so Frederic applied to him for help, and Henry very complacently sent over well-appointed troops under Henry de Trumbleville, and of course paid all expenses with his usual lavish extravagance. The Emperor was in no haste to send back veteran troops so well maintained, as he received all the glory they gained without sharing any of the expenses they incurred. One of the bravest soldiers of this distinguished corps was John Mansel, who, Judas-like, carried the bag of English money with which the soldiers were paid. Thus, in 1238, is the first mention made of him, more to his credit as a soldier than as a priest, for he had already taken holy orders. He distinguished himself alike in single combat and in general warfare, indeed so bravely had he acquitted himself that, on his return, he was received with royal favour; and to be a favourite of Henry's meant being treated like a spoilt child, and pampered with everything asked for. As a scholar of good reputation, and as a hospitable host, he might

have attained great social distinctions, but the favours heaped upon him by the king caused him to be looked upon with bitterly jealous feelings by the clergy. The king was governed by Mansel quite as much as ever he had been by De Burgh, or De Roches, and on one occasion when the Bishop of Lincoln had appointed a parson to the Church of Tame, which was in his gift, Mansel represented to the king that it was a desirable living for himself, and so desired him to dislodge the duly-appointed priest and place him in his stead. The wish of the favourite, of course, was sufficient, and Mansel was appointed. But he had not placed himself on a bed of roses. The bishop and archbishop interfered in vain, and the latter, knowing that the king would not easily budge, tried to flatter him into allowing the bishop to exercise his ecclesiastical right, and at the same time reward Mansel. He said: "What reason is there now for causing dispute or injury to either party? For considering the merits of the said John, who is a circumspect and sufficiently learned man, his Grace the Bishop of Lincoln will, at your request, and that of himself, be easily influenced to provide him with as good, if not a richer benefice, and the bestowal will be lawful and honourable on both sides; and the bishop, with all humility and devotion, begs that it may not be otherwise, for he is prepared to pronounce the anathema against all those who may injure or encroach upon the dignity of his church."—(*Matthew Paris.*)

When Mansel heard of this determination, not because he felt conscience-stricken by his own guilt, but in fear of evil consequences, he went to the king and begged, in language befitting a Uriah Heap, to be relieved of the living, lest he should be the unworthy means of causing dissension in high places, for, said the submissive and somewhat sycophantic John, "God will sufficiently provide for me at his own good pleasure so long as you are alive." The king was pleased with his religious self-denial and loyal submission, and purposely delayed giving his decision that Mansel might the longer retain the benefice; but when the then bishop was about to excommunicate all the disturbers of his church and dignity, Mansel resigned, and received from the king the far richer living of Maidstone, for which town he afterwards obtained a charter; and, in the same year, for to him that hath shall be given more abundantly, the rich benefice of Hovedon was also bestowed on him.

In the previous reign the barons and people had determined to dethrone King John, and set his relative, Louis, then Dauphin of France, on the throne. At their invitation Louis landed in England with a French army, but, luckily for England, John died rather suddenly, and the rebels determined not to punish the son, Henry, for the sins of his father, John, and so politely told Louis his services would be dispensed with, as they had unanimously agreed to give their support to the true heir, Prince Henry. Louis was disappointed, and, determining to take the kingdom

by force, was defeated and sent back to France, where he seized some of the English possessions, and, of course, this insult to the British crown and flag had to be avenged by war. Several battles were fought, and one of the most distinguished soldiers in them was John Mansel. In 1242, at the battle of Saintes, he showed special bravery in capturing the Count of Boulogne's seneschal, Peter Orige. In the following year, however, the brave soldier and learned priest came to grief, but his lucky star, as usual, brought new preferments as balm to his wounds. His exploits on this occasion are well described by his contemporary, Matthew Paris, who says:—
 "One of the king's clerks and special councillors, named John Mansel, a man brave in arms and of undaunted spirit, reproached the assailants with their slothfulness and loss of time; and just as he was setting an example to the others by more effectually rising up against the enemy and wishing to prepare a road, one of the besieged, situated in a higher part of the church, shot on the said clerk a stone of great weight and crushed his leg with the joints and marrow in his bones. And while the same man was preparing to overwhelm the rest of his body with stones, his friends, who were most sincerely attached to him, covered him with their own bodies and large shields, called targets, and thus with difficulty freed him from the peril of death. And the same John, severely wounded in body, was for a long time languishing and weak. And when, by the skill of the surgeons, he was restored, and began to breathe, the king, seeing his great valour and loyalty, from being a special councillor, made the said John a more special councillor still, as, from his well-proved merits, he deserved to be ranked among the highest in England."

English freedom has been gained through many revolutions, rebellions, civil wars, agrarian revolts, and the political struggles of craftsmen in our towns. At first the baron of Wigan was the owner of the town; it was part of his property, and the inhabitants were his tenants, who could do nothing without his consent. It was as much a part of his estate as the ground on which his manor was built. The townsmen either paid for their privileges by money or by labour. All were bound to help the lord of the manor in sowing and reaping, and his labourers were compelled by law to work for him all the year round. He held about one-fourth of his estate as a home farm or demesne in his own hands, his labourers living together in the town (in Hallgate) for protection, or to be ready in case of their being called upon to serve on an emergency in a military capacity. He was judge and governor, had a Court Leet and prison at his manor house, appointed bailiffs, exacted fines and forfeitures, and received all fees and tolls at fairs and markets. Citizens were (legally) entirely under his control before the granting of the Charter. Gradually, however, the better and more prosperous class of citizens first made bargains with him, and after long usage claimed these bargains as rights. Long leases, by custom,

became personal property. Guilds among the merchants regulated their own commercial laws. Townsmen soon became so powerful as to govern and tax themselves, and so got the town into their own possession, sometimes by purchasing the rights and sometimes by claiming the custom. Generation after generation added liberties, and better laws of trade, justice, and government, until by their influence and wealth special charters were granted to them, making the influential inhabitants citizens, burgesses, or freemen of the town.

When De Mansel first came to Wigan is not known, but when he did come he found an energetic, law-abiding people, who proved themselves quite capable of justly punishing transgressors of the homely laws of their community. At this time the powerful barons under the Earl of Leicester, the king's brother-in-law, rebelled; civil war ensued, the king was taken prisoner and compelled to vote according to the wishes of the people, and Parliament was for the first time composed of King, Lords, and Commons. This rude constitutional government was modelled from the customs of government long prevalent in the towns. Intelligent communities were persuaded of the necessities of upholding law and preserving order, in order to gain commercial prosperity and social comfort. Such were the feelings of the inhabitants of Wigan when Mansel became its rector and baron. His parish was a large and lucrative one. For several centuries it included all the townships for many miles round, including Hindley and other places afterwards made into separate parishes. All Saints' Church was the only place of worship in the great area. At the present day the parish is bounded on the north by Eccleston, Standish, and Bolton; on the south by Prescott, Winwick, and Leigh; on the east by the parish of Dean; and on the west by the parish of Ormskirk. It is ten miles long by six broad, and contains 27,610 statute acres.

Wherever the Normans went, their customs, manners, and language mingled with those of the Saxons. On the Continent they had been accustomed to see churches of not greater solidity, but of grandeur superior to those of the Saxons. As their manners were more refined, so were their tastes in architecture, and their peculiar style of round-headed arches, solid buttresses, small windows, and thick walls are still to be seen in extant castles and cathedrals. The simple parallelogram-shaped Church of Wigan must, at this period, have been very old, if not altogether decayed by age. The Normans replaced it by one of their own design, in the shape of a Latin cross, and occupying the same area as the present edifice. At the intersection of the nave, choir, and transepts on the south it was their custom to erect a lantern tower, although it is remarkable that the tower of Wigan Parish Church is on the north. There were no seats in the church, but the congregation stood or knelt, according to the forms of the service, on the clay, or stone, floor. For ages after, it was

customary for those who wished to sit to bring a stool with them, and when seats were first introduced, as the property of the building, they were for the use of women only, the men still using the floor as before. The floors were often damp, and always cold, and the ancient Saxon custom was still preserved of bringing rushes to spread on the floor to add to the comfort of the worshippers. The rushes were cut from the neighbouring moors and river banks, and carried ceremoniously in large sheaves, especially by the poor, who were often paid for their services. It was not unusual to leave the rushes in the churchyard until they were dried.

About two thousand years have passed since the ground on which the Parish Church stands was first consecrated, but the building itself has frequently been entirely replaced and often repaired during that period. Although the later edifices have occupied the same area and site, yet the architecture and appearance of each have been very different. The wattlework mud building of the early Saxons was long an obsolete style of ecclesiastical architecture when the stately edifice of the Normans was raised. The present construction is not yet adorned with the venerable weather-worn marks of age, but, stained with that poisonous smoke which kills or stunts all the local trees, is the very antipodes of the dilapidated building of two hundred years ago, when it was limewashed within and without, as white as the surplices of the priests, and thus stood in the midst of the busy town, not like a whitewashed sepulchre, but an emblem of purity. The church of De Mansel was unlike that of Fleetwood, which again differed from the present, like the manners and customs of the two ages. Though the religion is unchangeable, yet the houses, their builders, and the ministers of the doctrines, are historical examples of the change and decay both of human nature and national fabrics. On that sacred spot oblations have been offered to the unknown God; thence the modern ribald Fair sprang, and many holy ceremonies, long dead and corrupted, originated; there were Satanic orgies held and sacred shrines adored; there the bondslave and the tyrannous master worshipped; there have mouldered the bones of the ancient heroes of the town, while trophy flags, long crumbled to dust, draped their silent tombs. Civil war has been advocated within its walls; Puritanism, Ritualism, and Papacy have been there alternately supported and condemned according to the religious fashion of the day. Heretical zealots and Christian hypocrites have knelt with the humbly devout before its altars. There the eagle eye of the law has taken careful cognisance of the attendants, and marked the regularity of the parishioners, judged whether they prayed devoutly and received the sacrament with becoming solemnity. Litigations about its advowson and its rector's rights have embroiled it in the meshes of the law. It has been stormed by sacrilegious soldiers

and despoiled by iconoclasts. Their material doles have been given to the poor, while the rich were spiritually sent empty away.

An Irish wake is a mere meeting of friends who feast and drink in the presence of the dead lying in state, but an old English wake was a very different thing. It was the religious ceremony of a whole parish. In Wigan the great wake of the year was on the eve of All Saints, to whom the Parish Church is dedicated. All Saints' Day is one devoted to all saints and martyrs, who have not been sufficiently honoured by having a day set apart specially to each individual. This is a necessity, as there are at most only 366 days in one year, whereas of saints and martyrs their numbers are legion. The parishioners gathered together in the churchyard and in the church, and kept vigil by praying and feasting all night. Booths were erected outside, where festive provisions could be obtained. People came from long distances to join in the feast, and in many cases took away provisions with them for their families, so much so that these wakes were actually the origin of fairs, as larger amounts of provisions were annually required for the night and for home consumption. Pipers, or musicians, answering to our modern bands, used to play the people to church, and, by-and-bye, there was less praying inside than attention to the lively airs of the pipers outside, for there are many people who cannot have music without tripping to its notes. The churchyard became the scene of festive dances, or rings of lads and lasses who kissed adroitly at every pause of the music, whilst the booths, or temporary taverns, were patronised by idle men and gossiping women, who scrupled not to carry their beer within the sacred edifice, and drink it amid the noisy laughter of unholy jokes, and thus turned the, originally, purely religious ceremony into a ribald meeting productive of every social evil. To such fashionable carousals people would willingly and naturally flock, and, of course, persons of a speculative character would use their utmost endeavours to make money at them. Inducements were held out to the people to come to the feast by caterers for public amusements; games, also, of all sorts were introduced, in which the public were the competitors, and useful articles, cakes, and treacle-loaves, were the prizes. Bull-baiting, horse-racing, donkey-racing, foot-racing, sack-racing—often for ladies—fiddle matches, and cock-fighting, and such like, filled up the programme for the day. Such things brought the people to Wigan in great numbers; the townspeople got their pence for providing them with food and pleasure, and many country people brought their wares to vend to any buyers. So desecrated at all fairs did this consecrated ground become, by these originally nocturnal revels, that the Reverend Mr. Fleetwood (aided by Lord Derby), the great purger of his period, summarily put a stop to them.

Land and provisions were at a low price, but money was scarce, so much so that a coin of the realm was quite a curiosity for many of the dependent classes to

behold. A bull cost four shillings; a sheep with fine wool tenpence; whilst one with coarse wool was only worth sixpence, showing that the wool was much more valuable than the flesh. Swine's flesh was the principal animal food, and a sow or boar cost twelpence. Hugh le Norris, i.e., the Norwegian, held a carve of land in Blackrod, for which he paid two marks and two horses for the chase; whilst Hugh Blackrod held one carve of land and a charter from the king for a mere nominal price.

But for the happy and opportune innovations of the Normans, the Anglo-Saxons might have exterminated themselves by their semi-savage habits, for they ate till they were satiated and drank till they were sick. When not at war they spent their time at carousals, with the concomitant consequences. The Danes, whole armies of whom were often found helplessly drunk, strengthened the natives' habitual wish for intoxicating pleasures, and, however beneficial the influences of the Norman social civilisation, these habits were very far from being eradicated. Men and women met in town taverns, were joined by dissolute monks and priests, drank their ale and mead, a decoction from honey spiced with herbs, with all the natural results of debauchery—dancing, immorality, headache, and reflection. Several drank from the same cup, even at the feasts of the better classes; both ladies and gentlemen were requested to wipe their mouths carefully before drinking, "lest any grease" should get into the cup or horn, and so make the wine disagreeable for the next imbibor.

Public documents relating to the affairs of the ancient borough have by no means been tended with that religious and jealous care apparent in other English towns. Recently, historically speaking, their remains have been collected and buried in a strong chest that looks like a mausoleum erected by moderns to commemorate the ancients. What a trunk! what an official tomb it is! Chaos, oblivion, abode of dust and of rubbishy papers which ought long ago to have made their second journey through the mill. It is a burgh dust-bin where papers, parchments, accounts, books, election circulars, voters' lists, habeas corpus warrants and pleas, lie as if shot there like debris into a pit or coal into a cellar. It is a spot for an antiquarian revel that would reveal little. There, at the Borough Courts, they lie unknown. Not an inventory even of the contents is known to exist. No one living has hitherto examined the arcana. Though not pearls cast before swine, they are unheeded treasures that might be lying "where pearls lie deep." Although now carefully collected and carelessly protected, it is the old mistake of locking the stable door after the steed has been stolen. In their previous repository in the Town Hall the great box containing them was left open, or rather had no lock, and the idle and curious public dived into it in what manner they pleased, with that unhallowed carelessness always displayed when liberty is too freely obtained. Many papers and

parchments must have been long and interesting, and, no doubt, with the laudable intention of perusing, studying, or transcribing them, many were taken home and forgotten, like borrowed umbrellas. Some say they were destroyed at the Cromwellian visit to the town, but I am inclined to think that official carelessness and a reprehensible curiosity have destroyed more of them than ever the ruthless scapegoat Cromwell did. The charters have, happily, been more sacredly guarded, and are now fairly well protected in the Town Clerk's office. It is vain to regret the irretrievable, but it is impossible to suppress the useless wish that our official forefathers had been more conservative with such trusts. They may have been handed about as hieroglyphic curiosities to contemporary Pickwickians, or as parchment works of art to connoisseurs of articles of *virtu*, some of them being beautifully designed, and that of Charles II. being remarkably so. On it there is a very extensive heading and border of well-executed florid work, with an excellent likeness of the king on the left, and one of his queen on the right. His is a noble and serious face, full of expression, with heavy and very dark moustache. No sooner does the eye light on it than one exclaims—"Tis a royal Stuart's face!" This charter is as clear, bright, and legible as ever it was, and, I understand, was once photographed. But what shall be said of the Elizabethan charter? I have been unable to find it, and, as far as I know, the last authenticated beholder of it was Richard St. George, Norry King of Arms, in 1613. (Gregson's Fragments, p. 286.) Where is it? Has it, too, found its way into the old curiosity shop? As I know nothing about it, perhaps the best way to give it an honourably historical ending would be to aver that the prototype of iniquity (Cromwell) made a horse-blanket of it. There is in the Town Clerk's office what seems to be a draft copy of it on paper, but even that has mouldered to uselessness. All the other charters I have seen and examined.

It seems a remarkable thing that the charter of Elizabeth should be the only one of the Wigan charters which cannot be accounted for. I can find no authenticated reason for its loss or disappearance, and at the same time I wish to give, from contemporary history, what I believe to be a good reason for its disappearance. I conclude it has neither been lost nor stolen, but wilfully surrendered by the Corporation in exchange for one from Charles II. For an explanation it is necessary to review a part of the history of that time, when an attack was made on the Corporations for reasons detailed in histories of the kingdom. In order to institute a precedent, a special attack was made on the charters of London, which succeeded, and the charters were forfeited. The Wigan charters were, in a manner, similar to those of London. Boroughs trembled for the safety of their privileges. The afterwards notorious Jeffreys was Chief Justice, and he, anxious to do anything for the king's

pleasure, is said, in his circuits, "to have made all the charters, like the walls of Jericho, fall down before him, and to have returned laden with surrenders, the spoils of towns." Boroughs, troubled at the unhappy prospect of losing their honours, presented sycophantic addresses, beseeching special favours and exemptions. If a borough could maintain its rights to its charters by a public trial, it might retain them, but these trials were very expensive, and many boroughs, in order to avoid such expense, voluntarily gave up their old charters and received new ones in their stead. Was this not what was done with the Elizabethan charter of Wigan—the most recent in the possession of the borough? The conjecture is strengthened by the fact that there is in the, presumably, substituted charter the first mention of a Quo Warranto, whereby an assurance that the grounds upon which the Corporation claimed its rights and privileges should not be inquired into. The forbidding of the quo-warranto ran thus in the Wigan charter:—"We being also willing, and by these presents for us, our heirs, and successors, charging and commanding, as well the chancellor, barons of our exchequer at Westminster, and other justices of us, our heirs, and successors, as our Attorney and Solicitor-General for the time being; and each of them and all ministers and officers of us, our heirs, and successors whatsoever for the time being, that neither they, nor any, or any one of them, obtain, prosecute, or continue or make, or cause, or any of them make, or cause to be obtained, prosecuted, or continued, any writ or summons of quo warranto, or any our writ, or writs, or process whatsoever, against the aforesaid mayor, bailiffs, and burgesses of the borough aforesaid, or any one, or any of them, for any causes, things, matters, offences, claims, and usurpations, or any of them, by them, or any of them, attempted, claimed, accustomed, had made or usurped before the making of these, our letters, patent. Being also willing that the same mayor, bailiffs, and burgesses of the borough aforesaid, or any of them, be in no wise molested, or hindered, by any one, or any the justices, sheriffs, officers, or ministers aforesaid, in or for a debt, or claim, or abuse of any other liberties, privileges, franchises, or jurisdictions within the borough aforesaid, the liberties and precincts thereof, before the day of the making these, our letters patent, or be compelled to answer to any one, or any of them."

Many towns in the country were made boroughs by the barons, or lords, of the town, whilst to others the charters were granted direct by the king. These baronial charters simply granted legal claims of certain customary liberties to the inhabitants, and some of them were so insignificant as to be simply a special licence to buy and sell certain commodities within the town, that is, they were simply chartered as market-towns, whose inhabitants had some slight advantages over strangers or travelling merchants, who were never allowed to remain in the town longer than

forty days for mercantile purposes, and were not allowed to trade with other strangers, but with the inhabitants only. To such towns these charters only placed protective duties and laws on local trade, for, of course, the principles of Free Trade were then considered obnoxious and unfair. But there were other charters which gave far greater liberties and powers to the inhabitants on easy conditions. Such the royal charters generally were; and the charter of Wigan was issued by the king to the lord of the manor, or rector, whose living was the advowson of the Banastres, of Newton. In this charter, not only were all the privileges of a market-town allowed to the inhabitants, but they were allowed to govern themselves and their affairs and make their own bye-laws, subject to those of the realm, after the manner, in a primitive form, of municipal bodies of the present day. A certain amount of property was given to the inhabitants within the walls, which they could retain, sell, or bestow by will as ordinary heritable, but not entailed, property. If there was no will, the property descended to the next of kin, subject to a baronial duty. For this property a rent, that could never be increased, was paid at four stated periods of the year. Not only was this property bestowed on the inhabitants, called burgesses, but certain further privileges on the demesnes of the lord of the manor were granted. These burgesses were compelled to pursue their trades or callings only within their own towns, or, at furthest, within the barony. If the burgess husband died, the relict was entitled to a living from the estate, unless she married again, in which case everything became the property of the heir. The burgesses regulated the affairs of trade, and, as jurymen, settled disputes, debts, and certain crimes before the lord of the manor, as judge. At the manor-house there were a prison for the punishment of offenders, and public hall, or halmote, where the laws of the manor were read and pleas heard. In Appendix H. 228, No. 99, of the fourth Report of Commissioners on Courts of Common Law there is a notice of the ancient Courts of Pleas for the Borough of Wigan; a court held by prescription confirmed by various charters, having, originally, jurisdiction extending over the whole township of Wigan, in personal actions to an unlimited amount. All men were not alike subject to the law; what was wrong for dependants, or slaves, might be quite legal for burgesses who were freemen. There was one law for the burgess and another for the stranger; one for the master and another for the servant, who was treated like an inferior animal. Not only had the burgess to pay a small rent and perform sundry duties for the baron, but he had to grind his corn at the baron's mills—the Rector of Wigan had two on the Douglas—and bake at his oven. The punishment for breaking a law was generally a fine of a year's rent, twelvepence. The special leave of the rector had to be obtained before any of his dependants could marry, just as soldiers of the regular army have now to

obtain permission, but members of the family of a burgess required no such licence. Not only had Wigan a Guild Merchant for the good government of town's affairs and trade, but also a hanse, or confederation of merchants, for the good usage and safe passage of goods from one town, or kingdom, to another. Although Liverpool was but a small fishing village, it had received a charter thirty-nine years before Wigan, but it was only chartered as a free sea-port town, whereas Wigan was chartered as a royal borough (1246). The rector had a vice-regal power, which was sometimes very much abused, and, by way of payment for his urban duties, and compensation for property given to the burgesses, there were confirmed to him and his successors for ever, a weekly market every Monday, and an annual fair of six days' duration, viz., one on the eve, day, and morrow of the Ascension (Thursday in Rogation week); and the other on the eve, day, and morrow of All Saints' (November). All tolls, or duties, paid by merchants at these times belonged to him. No town was allowed to hold fairs without a special charter. They were instituted for the convenience of the burgesses, who, by that means, bought goods wholesale from travelling or foreign merchants for retail purposes.

Many persons in Wigan now possessed land which their forefathers had simply obtained on lease, and consequently they were landed proprietors, although often on a very small scale. They were generally also the merchants of the town, and were always recognised as the most influential men of the burghal society. The intellectual and moral progress of the past had been very great, and these freeholders were wise enough to see that each one, as an individual, had no power against the lords of the land, but they knew that union was strength, and so, for their individual interests and civic rights, they determined to form a fraternity, which, as a whole, vowed to support, defend, and be responsible for the actions of each of its individuals; to stand or fall by every member of the body. Such societies had had an ephemeral existence on the continent; but a very summary method was there taken for their extinction, for every individual who was found to be a member of such a corporation was liable to be scourged, have his nose slit, or be banished the realm. They were not thus treated in England where such corporations were instituted for the protection of liberties, and not with a view of over-ruling established laws or opposing the monarchy. They were instituted, really, for the fulfilling of the law, so that no individually strong man might take advantage of a weak man. In Wigan, as in other important English towns, such a corporation grew out of the necessities of the town's prosperous condition. Freeholders, or persons having a special interest in the prosperity of the country, agreed to unite as members of a family who had a common interest in civic affairs. "Let us," they said, "all share the same lot; if any misdo, let all bear it." The body defended the member from violence or wrong; appeared in court with testimony

in favour of anyone falsely accused, and held itself responsible for the obedience of its members to the laws of the realm. To such guilds, or corporations, neither the lord of the manor nor the king of the country could reasonably object, for it was really a moral combination of right against possible wrong and illegal might. Such was the Merchant Guild of Wigan, which became so powerful as to have a voice in the settlement of every local question. It became, indeed, a terror to evil doers, a praise and protection to all that did well; an institution in the defence of right. At first these freeholders were agricultural men, for the town was the abode of farmers; but as trade prospered and craftsmen became important persons in the town, they, too, were admitted into the guild. After a long trial these guilds proved themselves to be the true defenders of the law and the promoters of the prosperity of the land, and, in return for the unquestioned good they did, special privileges were conferred upon them. What they had by their union insisted upon was granted them by special law. The Wigan freeholders, or burgesses, had entire control of the business and merchandise of the town. No one could carry on any trade without their special leave. Strangers, or foreigners, were not allowed to buy or sell in their market without paying the commission enforced by them. On the other hand, special privileges were retained by the lord of the manor for the rights which the citizens had received. Those citizens were by Act of Parliament allowed to judge and punish certain culprits. As a manor the town had the privilege of holding a court every three weeks; the rector was the court baron, and his freeholders were the judges and jurymen who decided all suits. Anyone damaging, injuring, or molesting a citizen was liable to a fine of £10. The rector, lord of the manor, retained the power of trying and punishing trespassers, thieves, bondmen, and villains. Such privileges were granted by royal charter to the burgesses of Wigan in 1246, through the influence of John Mansel. Everything was done to make these guilds a genuine and successful combination. The members met purposely to talk over affairs of the town, and, in order to make these meetings attractive enough, monthly guilds—or feasts, as the original word means—took place in appointed houses. If they could not afford a guild hall—and they seem not to have had one in Wigan—they met in one of the principal rooms of a tavern. There postprandial speeches were made, the social cup drunk, and civic politics discussed. The custom prevails, or rather is commemorated, to this day; nightly meetings of local politicians have their friendly gatherings in private rooms of the ancient taverns, with their similar histories, associations, and customs handed down by the fathers of the town. There the modern burgesses meet as a social brotherhood, drink the healths of each other, discuss civic and imperial affairs, exchange opinions about the news of the day, and thus renewing their friendship and giving each a special interest in the other they

part, after the ringing of the modern curfew-bell, to meet on the morrow.

Slaves who had absconded from their masters in other parts of the country became free after living a year and a day in Wigan, and in this way the number of inhabitants was much increased, although this was a feudal custom, recognised as legal, common to all walled towns.

This is a very important era in the history of the town. The greater part of the population was composed of frankleynes—those who were considered sufficiently important to offer themselves, and be accepted, as sureties for the good conduct of their neighbours—freeholders, and yeomen. These were burgesses of the town. Each had an important house of his own, with other smaller houses at the back, built round a quadrangular court, for his servants or labourers. Each had his small croft, or piece of property, with a right to certain common grounds held on certain conditions made to the lord of the manor. Each felt he had a personal and responsible right to further the prosperity of the town, and secure the general social customs, and the rights now legally granted them by charter were simply the result of common-sense principles, with which custom had long made them familiar. They were the laws which necessity had compelled them to adopt, and which their own interests made them enforce. The fashions of trial by ordeal were beginning to become obsolete; to carry a hot bar of iron a certain distance in the bare hand without being injured was looked upon as a doubtful method of proving one's innocence; to lift a stone out of a pitcher of boiling water without being scalded, or to swallow a piece of bread hastily and unmasticated without being choked (in answer to a simultaneous prayer) were not so good methods of trial as those by jury, which they had recently adopted as the law of Wigan. Juries then were very different in many ways from those of the present day. The origin of the system was a good and reasonable one. The jurymen were necessarily neighbours of the accused, because they knew him best, and were most able to judge of his actions because of their knowledge of his character; moreover, they were jealous of the privileges of their community to which the accused belonged, and so they would be anxious to rid their society of him if guilty, and at the same time defend him if considered innocent, with as much zeal as if it were a personal matter. Thus, morally, and by their frankpledge, they were the best judges of the case. These jurymen were the neighbours of the accused, witnesses in the trial, and judges of the case, and it was necessary that they should be unanimous in their opinion before judgment could be legally passed. Of course, this system was often abused, for even at assizes judges and jurymen were often bribed. It was found on a parliamentary inquiry in the reign of Edward I. that there were only two honest judges in England.

It is natural to suppose that many petty grievances would arise amongst the townspeople from the carelessness of herd-boys driving the cattle to, or from, pasture in the rector's grounds. Obstreperous swine, or other beasts, would often get out and destroy gardens, and so cause much vexation to the owner. An official referee was chosen by the burgesses to see that the borough laws were enacted, and amongst his other numerous duties one was to assess the amount of damage done in this way by stray, or carelessly herded, animals. He was called a burleyman, the derivation of which is variously given, as byrelawman and byelawman.

The natives of England have always had the peculiar characteristic of wishing to be governed by themselves, and, at the same time, having a sovereign over them. In all the many revolutions for liberty and self-government, or against the abuse of despotic kings, it was never a national wish to be without a crowned head. Man is a free-will agent, but no man argues that it is therefore right to do whatever he wills. As the impulse must be kept under control by the superior powers of reason, or as all disputes in national sports even are satisfactorily referred to an umpire who is not necessarily believed to be infallible, although certainly impartial, so has the nation felt that it must have a supreme head, independent and impartial, whose very fallibility, publicly acknowledged and allowed, creates the necessity of inner circles of government dependent on local organisation, and necessary to the success of the complete national constitution. Saxon and Norman thoughts have run in the same political groove from the very infancy of English civilisation. Communities first slowly organised themselves, and made, by custom, their successful organisations necessities of their existence, and then wise rulers and diplomatists yielded to the necessities and granted charters which gave the established organisations legal authority and royal recognition. Thus it was that the necessities of the time and the intelligence of the inhabitants of Wigan demanded and received a local self-government. The charter granted to Wigan caused no local revolution or sudden change, but merely established legally what custom had long confirmed. The inhabitants had proved that they could govern themselves, and at the same time better support the national government, as well as that of the locally supreme baron. The king was convinced of this, and, therefore, he granted to John de Mansel (who was, according to the not then extinct feudal custom, the individual responsible to him) a royal charter, and he in turn, the lord of the town, being convinced of the utility, necessity, and diplomacy of the case, granted his legal charter to the inhabitants, who were actually his subjects. As this was the first of similar charters given to Wigan, a translation of the original is herewith given for the perusal of the reader. The original document I have seen and examined in the Town Clerk's office. It is legibly written in Latin on one piece of parchment, slightly larger than

a page of foolscap, to which is attached the great seal—very small when compared with the great seal in future charters. According to custom the seal of wax—in this case green—hangs by a thick cord a few inches from the parchment.

30TH HENRY III. (1246.)

“Henry, by the grace of God, King of England, Lord of Ireland, Duke of Normandy, Aquaintain and Count of Angers; to all archbishops, bishops, abbots, priors, earls, barons, justices, sheriffs, chief ministers, and bailiffs, and his faithful subjects greeting: Know YE that we have granted, and by this, our charter, confirmed for us and our heirs to our beloved and faithful, John Mansel, parson of the Church of Wigan, that his vill of Wygayn may be a borough for ever, and that the burgesses of the same borough may have a Guild Merchant, with a treasury and other liberties and free customs to that Guild belonging, and that no one, who is not of that Guild, may make any merchandise in the aforesaid borough, unless of the will of the same burgesses. We have also granted to the same burgesses and their heirs that they may have soke and sak, and thol and theam, and attachment within the said borough, and infangenthef and utfangenthef, and that they may be free throughout our whole land, and through all the ports of the sea, from toll, custom, passage, pontage, and stallage, and that they may make no suit of the Counties or Wappentakes concerning their tenures which they hold within the borough aforesaid. We have also granted to the same burgesses and their heirs, that whatsoever traders shall come to the borough aforesaid with their merchandise, of whatsoever place they shall be, foreigners, or others, who shall be of our peace, or of our leave, shall come into our land, may come safely and securely to the aforesaid borough with their merchandise, and safely there may stay and safely from thence may return by doing there the right and due customs; we do also prohibit that no one may do injury or damage, or molestation, unto the aforesaid burgesses, upon our forfeiture of £10. Wherefore we do will and firmly command for us and our heirs that the aforesaid vill of Wigan be a borough for ever, and that the aforesaid burgesses may have the aforesaid Guild Merchant, with the Hanaper and with the other liberties and free customs to that Guild belonging, and that they may have all other liberties and free customs and quittances as is aforesaid. Witnesses hereto—Richard Earl of Cornwall, our brother, Roger le Pygot Earl of Norfolk, Peter de Saband, William de Ferrers, Ralph Fit Nichol, William de Cantilupo, John de Plesset, Paul Peyner, Robert de Mustengros, Bartholemy Peché, and others. Given by our hand at Woodstock, the 26th day of August, in the 30th year of our reign.”—(Haddock's translation.)

For the perusal of antiquarian and classical readers, a copy of the original charter is subjoined:—

30mo HENRICI III.

“Henricus Dei gratia Rex Angliæ Dominus Hiberniæ Dux Normanniæ Aquitanniæ et comes d’Andes Archiepiscopis Episcopis Abbatibus Prioribus Comitibus Baronibus Justiciariis Vicecomitibus Præpositis Ministris et omnibus Ballivis et Fidelibus suis Salutem : SCIATIS nos concessisse et hac Carta nostra confirmasse et nobis et Hæredibus nostris dilecto et fideli nostro Johanni Mansel Parsonæ Ecclesiæ de WYGAIN quod VILLA sua de WYGAYN Burgus sit imperpetuum et quod Burgenses ejusdem Burgi habeant Gildam mercatoriam cum Hansa et aliis libertatibus et liberis consuetudinibus ad Gildam illam pertinentibus Et quod nullus qui non sit de Gilda illa Mercandisam aliquam in prædicto Burgo faciat nisi de voluntate eorundem Burgensium CONCESSIMUS etiam eisdem Burgensibus et eorum Hæredibus quod habeant Soke et Sak et Thol, et Theam, et Attachiamantum infra Burgum prædictum et Infangenthef et Unfangenthef, et quod quieti sint per totam Terram nostram et per omnes portus Maris de Thelonio Lestagio Passagio Pontagio et Stallagio et quod nullam Secutionem Comitatum seu Wapentachiorum faciant de Tenuris suis quas tenent infra Burgum prædictum—CONCESSIMUS etiam eisdem Burgensibus et eorum Hæredibus quod quicunque Mercatores petierint Burgum prædictum cum Mercandis suis de quocunque loco fuerint sive extranei sive alii qui de pace nostra fuerint vel de Licentia nostra in terram nostram venerint salvo et secure ad prædictum Burgum veniant cum Mercandis suis et salvo ibidem morentur et salvo inde recedant faciendo inde rectas et debitas Consuetudines.—PROHIBEMUS etiam ne quis prædictis Burgensibus injuriam vel dampnum seu molestiam faciat super forisfacturam nostram decem Librarum—QUARE volumus et firmiter præcipimus pro nobis et Hæredibus nostris quod prædicta Villa de Wygayn liber Burgus sit imperpetuum et quod prædicti Burgenses habeant prædictam Gildam Mercatoriam cum Hansa et cum aliis Libertatibus et liberis Consuetudinibus ad Gildam illam pertinentibus et quod habeant omnes alias libertates et liberas Consuetudines et quietantias sicut prædictum est—HUIUS Testibus *Ricardo Comite Cornubense fratre nostro*, Rogero le Pygot Comite Norfolcense, Petro de Saband, Willhelmo de Ferrariis, Radulpho Fit Nichol, Willhelmo de Cantilupo, Johanne de Plesset, Paulino Peyner, Roberto de Mustengros, Bartholomæo Peche et aliis—DATA per Manum nostram apud Wodestok vicesimo sexto die Augusti Anno Regni nostri tricesimo.”

By this charter the town was governed under the strictest principles of the feudal system, everyone being subject in some manner to render service to his superior. The burgesses, or guilds, were one body which pledged itself for the good conduct of its individual members. They formed really a well disposed body of unionists determined to stand, or fall, together in defence of right against might. There were many boroughs in the times of the Saxons in which the borough properties were given to the highest bidding burgesses. The Normans, however, appointed a bailiff, or

borough-reeve, of their own, fixed their own rents, and exacted them with great tyranny. They soon discovered that, after deducting expenses, they got far less by exaction than the burgesses were willing to pay on the old farming system which was again resorted to. Privileges were then granted to them, and some purchased by them, and they were allowed to choose their own mayor.

If a burgess did not pay his rent, the door was carried away from his house, and he was not allowed to restore it until he had paid. This was rather a cheaper method of evicting a bad tenant than the recently popular one of taking off the roof. The richest class of burgesses had windows made of small pieces of horn, Lancashire being specially famed for the excellence of its horns. The windows of the poorer people were simply covered by a linen cloth to keep out the wet and wind. Whether Wigan had a guild of horners it is now impossible to ascertain, but there is no reason to think it had not. Bottlemakers and horners afterwards became a united guild, for bottles and drinking cups were alike made of horn.

There were only the Market Place and four small streets in the town, Hallgate, Wallgate, Millgate, and Standishgate. In most of the old towns the chief street was called High Street, whilst in the most ancient towns the Danish termination *gate*, meaning a street, is preserved. The fact that the names of the principal streets in Wigan have this termination would not be a proof in itself that the town had once been fortified by a wall, but would simply imply that the streets or roads led to, or had direct connection with, some place indicated by the previous part of the name. Standishgate was the road to Standish, one of the oldest neighbouring townships, which has increased very little because it has no staple trade or peculiar commercial facility. Hallgate and Bishopgate led to the rectory, which was invariably called the Hall in ancient times. Millgate led to the rector's mills, for he had two water-mills. Wallgate was the road to Warrington, and as Warringtongate would have been of unwarrantable length, doubtless it received its shorter appellation simply because it led beyond the wall, or, as suggested by one writer, because it skirted the wall for some distance. Most of the other names, like the streets themselves, are modern and connected with local worthies, or have the origin common to streets in all towns.

One of the necessary parts of the sacred edifice was a belfry. Bells had been in use at least since the time of Moses, and were used for civil and military purposes by the Greeks and Romans. For both purposes was the bell used in a parish church. In all western churches it was used from the end of the fourth century for calling the people to prayer. No doubt one was placed in the belfry at Wigan by the Romans and used for military purposes, as it was certainly used long afterwards by the Normans as a signal to put out fires as well as for other civil

and religious purposes. The curfew bell is still tolled at Wigan, although not at the original time, but at half-past ten. It was believed that the ringing of bells allayed turbulent spirits, calmed the troubled sea, and put to flight the clouds, thunder, and lightning.

The old staple trades often forsake towns, and indeed countries. Tradesmen sometimes find there is a greater demand for their services, or greater facilities for their prosperity, in other towns or countries, to which they naturally go. Some trades, again, altogether die out because there is no demand for the craft; the substantial architecture of the Saxons and Normans is especially a mystery to modern people. The staple trades of Birmingham, Sheffield, and other towns are now as well known in other countries as in the towns that were alone celebrated for them in olden times. The most important craft that has altogether left Wigan is that of bell-casting. In the history of the 17th and 18th centuries notice will be taken of the celebrated bell-makers in Wigan, for whose services there was a great demand. Wigan bells are still to be found in different parts of England and Wales. The foundries must have been large ones, although it is not known in what part of the town they were. Bells were first cast in England about 940 A.D. by crafty monks, who were the carvers, gilders, and designers of their age—they alone being skilled workmen.

There is no authentic information about the re-building of the Parish Church, but antiquarian relics often record a more truthful history than written books. According to those relics, religious edifices have been erected on the same site from the time that Wigan was a Roman settlement. Whether the eminence of the hill was sacred to the Druids we have neither relics nor records to say, but part of a Roman altar found there is preserved to this day. After the Saxon edifice there was certainly built a Norman Church, as several remains of the earliest Norman architecture have been found. When a chancel was built to the church in 1821 the masons made use of the old stones, which happily in all cases they did not re-carve. One of these waste stones was a mutilated monument of a priest of the Norman period, and this, just as it was, without thinking of the historical chapter they were recording, the workmen used for a part of the foundation. A Norman arch and the bases and cylindrical piers have also been found, and thus the very stones prove the antiquity of the sacred edifice, just as the rings on the trunk of a tree tell its age. The town was the rector's property, but after it was incorporated he bestowed, by charter in 1249, special privileges on the burgesses or members of the guild and to their heirs for ever, and the granted lands from thence became freehold property. Then every burgess was given five roods of land, in return for which certain services were to be rendered by them and their heirs to the rector and his heirs. Not only was

this land given to them for cultivation, or purposes of trade, but they were allowed to take out of his woods, which were very extensive, timber for building as well as for firewood, by which the ground was cleared for cultivation, to the advantage of both parties. The principal food then was pork, and every burgess fed several swine for his household use. The lord of the manor gave them liberty to feed their swine in his forests. Moreover, every three weeks they were allowed to hold a court, in which questions of trade were legally settled by twelve jurymen appointed by, and from, themselves. For those times these were great privileges. These burgesses, however, were the rector's tenants, but could not be evicted except for the non-payment of their simple rent of threepence a quarter, and a further service to him of grinding at his mill to the extent of twenty measures without payment. Where these mills of the rector's were is not stated, but the likelihood is that they were built on the river Douglas (for they certainly were water-mills) at the end of Millgate Street, for which reason that street would receive its special name. As the rector from the earliest times has always been a large proprietor, the living must necessarily always have been a good one. In the year 1291 it was worth fifty merks (£33 6s. 8d.), but many a priest at that time, and for long afterwards, was considered well off when he had a salary of four or five pounds a year. When Thomas à Becket was Archdeacon of Canterbury he only had £100 a year.

It must have been a physical impossibility for Mansel to visit all his livings, and yet he was constantly receiving ecclesiastic and State appointments, both lucrative and important. He certainly spent little of his time in Wigan. In his day it was customary, regardless of responsibility, to accept all that was offered, and, expecting more, draw the lucrative income and appoint subordinate vicars at the lowest stipend on which it was possible to exist. The rectors easily procured exemption and absolution from the Popes for the wilful neglect of souls committed to their charge. The ecclesiastics in Rome gloated in luxurious revelry and open vice, and, to minister to their ever-craving depravities, they granted absolution, for money, from the most heinous and revolting crimes, and thus, for filthy lucre, the scandalous neglect of monks and rectors was winked at and encouraged. Thus, favoured by the indulgences of the Pope, and the gratification of his own personal ambition, Mansel accumulated wealth, accepted every proffered office, and retained all that were in his own gift. He was made Chancellor of St. Paul's Church, London, and, in 1247, Keeper of the Great Seal as Vice-chancellor. The king was very much attached to, and influenced by, his royal mother, who, soon after King John's death, married her first lover, the Count of Marche, by whom she had a son, to whom the king was also greatly attached, but his love for Mansel was greater

still. The old royal favourites had fallen into disgrace; but Mansel had fought the severe polemical battles of the king against Leicester, and so he was found "faithful, and necessary in supporting his (the king's) cares and solitudes," and, consequently, nothing desirable was kept from him. When the provostship of Beverley—a very lucrative sinecure—became vacant and offered to Mansel by the Archbishop of York, the king was desirous of giving it to his half-brother, but allowed the Wigan rector, who expressed his wish to have it, to accept it lest he should be grieved or robbed.

The charter from Henry III., granting a fair and market to Maidstone, in Kent, is witnessed by John Mansel in 1261; but long before this to the good and worthy burgesses of Wigan Mansel granted the following charter (translated) about 1249, for, whatever his failings were, he was kind and hospitable, and his liberality was as great as his ambition.

THE FIRST PARISH CHARTER.

"To all sons of our Holy Mother Church to whom this present writing may come, John Mansel, Rector of the Church of Wigan, greeting in the Lord. Be it known to all men that I have given and conceded, and by this, my present charter, have confirmed, for myself and my successors, to the burgesses in Wigan, and their heirs or their assigns, that they should have their free town and all rights, customs, and liberties, as is contained in the charter of liberty and acquaintance of the Lord King; and that each of them should have to their burgage five roods of land to themselves and their heirs or assigns; and that they should grind, at my mill, to the extent of twenty measures without payment; and that they should have in my wood sufficient for building and burning, together with quittance of pannage for the nourishment of their own pigs within my wood; to have and to hold of me and my successors to themselves, and their heirs or assigns, freely, and quietly, and honourably, with common of pasture, and with all other easements belonging to the said town of Wigan, within the town and without; and that they should have their pleas in portemote once in three weeks, and their verdict by twelve men, and amercements by the same; paying therefor annually to me or my successors, by themselves and their heirs or assigns, upon each burgage twelve pence, at the four terms, viz., at the Feast of St. John Baptist threepence, at the Feast of St. Michael the Archangel threepence, at the Nativity of Our Lord threepence, and at Easter threepence, for all secular services, exactions, and demands. And I, the aforesaid John Mansel, Rector of the Church of Wigan, and my successors, will warrant all the above-written to the said burgesses of the town of Wigan, and their heirs and assigns, against all men and women for ever. And that this donation and concession should remain firm and stable I have put my

seal to this writing, to which are witnesses :—Thomas Gretlees, William de Butler, Matthew de Redman (at that time Sheriff of Lancashire), Robert Bandastre, Robert de Lathome, William de Clifton, John de Lamar, John de Lee, Henry de Torboke, Adam de Molenex, Warren de Walton, Henry de Sefton (at that time bailiff), and others.”—(Close Roll, 27th Eliz, 2nd part.)

The professional man is full of anxiety when absent from business, but the holder of a sinecure may have pleasure free from care. Whilst Mansel's northern barony of Wigan was being attended to by the burgesses and vicar, he was basking under the royal presence and favour. He was the adviser and companion of the king, and occupied a prominent place in all public and popular royal displays and pageants. When extraordinary ambassadors were required to do distinguished work, Mansel was sure to be chosen, especially if there were payment for the service, although the great and fundamental law of political economy, service for service, was very far from being one of the first principles of his morality. Uninterrupted by his interference, Wigan progressed in the art of local government, and became comparatively self-dependent. Trade increased, wealth was accumulated, social comforts were improved, agricultural interests advanced, added to which there was an increased demand for skilled labour. But the burghers' progress towards wealth was slow and insignificant when compared with that of the rector. He had the distinguished honour of accompanying the Abbot of Westminster to Germany, in 1247, to arrange for a marriage between the daughter of the Duke of Brabant and Prince Edward, the then future King of England. His salary was sure, but his services were often failures, and they were so in this mission. Two years afterwards he accompanied the king and queen in state to view the ceremony of enthroning Boniface as Archbishop of Canterbury, but by the way, at Maidstone, he was taken suddenly and seriously ill, and the whole court was in confusion, for it was rumoured that the favourite was poisoned and was certainly dying. The most skilful physicians of the day were ordered to give him their best attention, and the result was that John Mansel was snatched from the very jaws of death.

While great and steady progress attended the Wigan borough, civil troubles were darkening the political atmosphere throughout the country, and the credulous king, fearing the threats of the people, attempted to bring them to reason by a strange strategy. He pretended to be anxious to take the pilgrim's staff for the Holy Land in company with many of his nobility, thinking thereby to distract the attention of the people from rebellion, and hoping to exact money, of which he was always in need, to pay the expenses of his sojourning. He and his nobles received the holy symbol of the Cross from the archbishop, then the money for his expenses was paid, and so, his chief wish being fulfilled, as predetermined he returned without

further progress as a pilgrim. Of course, John Mansel was in the secret, and although he, too, had pretended all along that they were seriously bent on going to Palestine, he returned with his royal master, leaving the other more zealous nobles to carry out their own intentions. Meantime the see of Winchester had become vacant, and, strange to say, Mansel, with his 700 benefices, expressed no wish to receive the bishopric, but rather did all in his power to have Ailmar, the king's uterine brother, presented, although he was but a lad, uneducated and even without holy orders. Mansel, because he was most clever in all kinds of argument, was chosen to persuade the clergy to accept the boy as their bishop. The rector was a good and indulgent baron, although a neglectful parson; a lawyer of acute observation and convincing argument; a royal flatterer and favourite. His many failings were fostered by the depravities of his age; yet he was, undoubtedly, a most benevolent and hospitable man.

From a utilitarian point of view, all national movements ought to improve commerce, and in the thirteenth century, when people knew the value of money, men were anxious to know what value their labours, or actions, were worth. Even this was so in religious matters, except in the case of devotees blind to everything but glory or martyrdom. What commercial profit could accrue from the Crusades? said worldly men, when they were young, and yet, long before they had become old, they saw the immense impetus that was given to commerce by these very Crusades. Wigan was one of the chief towns benefited by this commercial spirit. Although the Crusaders were all soldiers and Christians when they started, their lives were not entirely spent on the battle-field, and what time they did spend there was generally sufficient to cool their ardour for the cause of the Cross. Many of them turned out to be mere speculative tourists, who longed to have the treasures of the East in the markets of the West. Those who were unable to buy and sell for themselves communicated their intelligence to the tradesmen and capitalists of their own districts. This intelligence in many centres, however, was useless, for their inhabitants were either nobles, villains, or serfs. Lancashire was one of the few favoured centres whose inhabitants could seek work where they pleased, for in it there was a comparatively large surplus population, and Wigan was one of the largest, if not the largest, town in it, and one of the three towns to which a royal charter had been granted. One of the chief discoveries of the East was cotton in Smyrna and Cyprus. This cotton was shipped in large quantities to London, and then carried to Wigan and Manchester on pack horses. Thus, an important population of weavers sprang up in the town, who sent their webs back to the markets of London. Lint, or flax, was also extensively cultivated in the north of Ireland, sent over to the cotton-weaving towns, woven into linen (the females of

the house being the "spinsters"), and then returned to the Irish markets. Leave also was given to dig coal, which was largely sent to London and the neighbouring towns, although Newcastle was the chief centre from which London was supplied. Old hovels and wattlework houses were rapidly giving place to stone ones, with thatched roofs, although these were beginning to give place to tiles and stone-flags, consequently there was an addition to the town artificers of masons, carpenters, and thatchers, but the yeomen of the neighbourhood employed the majority of the population, in the seasons, for Wigan had already become the market town for a large agricultural district. Education was confined to the clergy, and even they knew very little, yet they did much to improve agriculture, in which they took a special interest even to the tossing of hay. A middle-class was already beginning to spring up from the weavers, tradesmen, and well-to-do workmen. Wages were considered good, although haymakers only got a penny a day, labourers threehalfpence, carpenters twopence, and masons threepence. For the latter trades a long apprenticeship was required, and so they came under the heading of skilled labour; we imagine, however, little architectural skill would be required to build common houses without chimneys, a hole in the roof being the only exit for the smoke, the furniture of the house not being sufficient to give even a stool to each member of the family, the majority of whom had to stand, squat on the floor, or sit on logs round the fire. Even the yeomen could only boast of one or two beds, three or four seats, and one or two dishes of brass, although in the dark evenings they generally had the luxury—one denied the poor—of a tallow candle. Tanners, too, flourished in the town, for shoes were quite an expensive article of attire, the better class of people wearing them with very long toes, pointed and twisted, like horns. Wages were not low, when compared with the price of provisions and the necessaries of life, for land cost only three shillings and sixpence an acre, and a fat ox sixteen shillings.

The royal and parish charters no doubt elated the inhabitants of Wigan, and gave new zest to their loyalty. The glories and spoils of war will always have, to some, a greater fascination than commercial toil and success, and no doubt many of the patriotic townsmen neglected their work and the progressive pursuits of peace, and now went with the Earl of Derby into Guienne to join in the war which was commenced at the instigation of the mother of the king in 1258.

The family of Ince in Aspull were the lords of the manor of Ince, which was conveyed to John Gerard when he married Ellen, the daughter and heiress of Richard of Ince in 1399. Walter, the ancestor of the Gerards, came over with the Conqueror, and was made Castellan of Windsor. His great grandson distinguished himself in what is erroneously called the conquest of Ireland in 1172, when Fitzstephen landed with

140 knights and 300 archers, and Strongbow with 1,200 men. He afterwards settled at Bryn, and by the above-mentioned alliance of Ellen and John Gerard, two of the principal Wigan families were united. Sir Thomas Gerard, Knight, was created a baronet at the first institution of that honour, the 9th James I., 1611. The house called Ince Hall, on the Peel Ditch Estate, was built by Roger Browne, in the reign of James I. He was descended from Roger Brown de Ince, gentleman, 14th Richard II., whose sons, under the names of Roger and Ralph, successively inherited the estate from that period to 22nd Henry VIII., when Ralph, dying without issue, was succeeded by his brother James, who settled the property on his son William in 2nd Elizabeth. William was succeeded by Roger, who built the hall and mortgaged the lands, which were redeemed by his brother Ralph in 12th James I. Ince Hall came to Henry, who by will dated 24th September, 1726, left it to Edward Holt, gentleman, eldest son and heir of his nephew, Robert Holt, of Wigan, Esq., and is, says Baines, "now the joint property of General Clegg and Thomas Case, of Liverpool, Esq., in right of their marriages with the two daughters and co-heiresses of Edward Holt, Esq., of Holt, in Shevington and Ince. Holt's Hall is a large, old-fashioned, wood and plaster structure, and with its gables and squares exhibits a fine specimen from the termination of the avenue (whence it is seen to the best advantage) of the old Lancashire halls, once so numerous, but now so rapidly falling into decay." Westwood House, a handsome mansion, is the seat of the Walmesley family.

The mad Parliament in 1258 had enacted revolutionary laws at Oxford, and appointed a committee to reform the State. That committee enacted that four knights should come to Parliament to represent the freeholders of every county; that sheriffs should be chosen annually by vote; that accounts of the public money should be given every year; that Parliament should meet three times a year. This meant rebellion against the king and his court; but, happily, there was disunion among the barons, and the question of dispute was put to the arbitration of the King of France, who declared in favour of the English King, but the people had been roused and would not submit, and open rebellion and civil war followed. The king was alarmed and fled to Dover, in readiness to escape to France. Mansel was left in charge of the Tower of London, and the barons and the people were up in arms. The king returned to Winchester, and immediately committed unconstitutional acts, which are well-known chronicled facts. The nation became more bitter and determined than ever. Mansel warned the king of his danger, and advised him to take refuge in the Tower from the fury of the barons, which he did. Day after day affairs became more serious against the court party, and Mansel, leaving his king to his fate, fled to the Continent for safety.

John Mansel, then king's secretary, returned and was appointed Keeper of the Great Seal, and accompanied the king on the Continent in 1262. The Lord Chancellor received five shillings a day, with a specified amount of wine, wax, and candles. It is estimated by Lord Campbell that this amount would now-a-days be equal to £4,000 a year. Whilst the king and Mansel remained on the Continent discontent was briskly brewing. After the "Provisions of Oxford" there was a strong reaction in favour of the king. Montfort lost the confidence of the nation, and went into exile. Mansel applied, in the king's name, to Pope Alexander for a dispensation to free the king from keeping his promise in regard to the Oxford Provisions, and again the national feeling opposed the king. Montfort seized the opportunity, returned, imprisoned Mansel for publishing the papal bull, confirmed the Oxford Provisions, and convoked a Constitutional Parliament in 1265.

Thus, in 1264, Mansel was a poor exile. He had held 700 benefices, and had been revered by all who knew him intimately. His hospitality was as bountiful as that of Thomas à Becket in his palmy days, for he is said to have feasted at his own house in Tote-hillfields "two kings, two queens, with their dependencies, 700 messes of meat scarce serving for the first dinner." Yet, though thus powerful, honoured, and wealthy at home, he died poor, wretched, and miserable abroad, the place of his burial even being unknown. Matthew Paris says:—"Sir John Mansel, a man, prudent, circumspect, and rich, wisely considering that the favour of a king is not hereditary, nor the prosperity of the world always permanent, founded a religious house of regular canons near by Rumney, and endowed it with very ample revenues, which he replenished with canons." Anstey's *Munimenta Academica* contains the following:—"The executors of John Pontysera, Bishop of Winchester, have given to the university of Oxford the sum of 200 marks for the use of the masters and scholars on the following conditions:—That on St. Nicholas' eve annually the said bishop shall be commemorated in a mass for the dead, with special remembrances made of John Mansel and John, nephew of the bishop, and that every year the priest making circuit of the schools with the bedell, shall recite the names of the aforesaid persons among the benefactors of the university. That, at the commencement and close of each term and in processions and masses celebrated by the university, special remembrance shall be made of the said persons; and that guardians of the chest in which the money bequeathed is kept shall be elected annually on the eve of the conception of the Blessed Virgin, and in the same form as that by which the proctors of the university are elected; that at the time of such election auditors of the accounts of the outgoing guardians shall be appointed, who shall make a written statement as to the state of the chest, the amount of increase arising from the sale of pledges deposited by borrowers, &c. These guardians shall be discreet and faithful

members of the university, and shall always be three at least. Pledges not redeemed within a year shall be sold. The statutes already in force as to other chests shall apply also to this chest. Every month the guardians shall proceed to inspect the chest, proclamation having been first made throughout all the schools. Scholars of all faculties, who are needy, may borrow from the chest as follows:—A regent master may borrow forty shillings, a non-regent two marks and a half, a bachelor two marks, a sophist one mark. And every scholar thus borrowing shall be bound to say for the souls of the aforesaid persons the Lord's Prayer and the *Ave Maria* each five times. The university accept the bequest and promise to fulfil the conditions."

CHAPTER IV.

The second known Rector, De Waleton—Sir Robert Banastre—Justices of the Peace—State of the Streets and Roads—Borough Seal—Jews—Value of the Parish Church Living—Wigan, a City of Refuge—Strange Charge against De Waleton and the Burgesses: Their Trial at Lancaster—Wigan deprived of its Chartered Liberties.

THE second known Rector of Wigan, Adam de Waleton, was less eminent than the first, but much more eccentric, and, seemingly, had strange ideas of justice and morality. His trials by jury were a farce, even when compared with those by ordeal. Who he was, or why, or by whom he was presented to the living, is unknown. It is reasonably conjectured that he belonged to the family of that name holding estates in Walton, Wavertree, and Mensom. Whoever he was, it is likely that, even although rector of such a rich living as that of Wigan, posterity would never have heard of him but for his idiosyncrasies which brought humiliation and disgrace on the town, thus immortalising an unenviable, but by no means solitary, example of men's histories being recorded because of their bad actions.

The living at this time had a *charity* connection with the cathedral at Lichfield. Sir Robert Banastre, patron of the parish, stipulated that thirty marks (£20) should be taken from the endowment of the church and applied to the building fund of the cathedral, with ten marks (£6 13s. 4d.), of which sum bread should be purchased for, and distributed to, the poor by the Sacristan, and the remaining twenty marks to be appropriated for the use of the Sacristan. Until 1540, when the diocese of Chester was formed by Act of Parliament, the parish of Wigan was in the diocese of the Bishop of Lichfield; it is now in the diocese of the Bishop of Liverpool.

In the *Notitia Cestriensis*, or Records of the Diocese of Chester, vol. 2, paragraph 2, page 244, it is stated, "It appears by a record of Roger de Yealand, that thirty marks per annum were granted out of the endowment of the Church of Wygan by that nobleman, Sir Robert Banastre, patron of the same, and Mr. Richard Reet, of the same; and it is covenanted that ten marks should be annually paid towards the sustentation of the fabric of the cathedral (Lichfield), ten marks should be

expended in bread for the poor and be distributed by the Sacristan, and the residue should be for the use of the Sacristan; and if at any time the see of Lichfield should be vacant, the Archdeacon of Chester should compel the payment of the said sum. This donation was attested and dated at Lichfield Vith Ides of July, A.D. 1265."

The advowson of the Parish Church of Wigan belonged, until the time of Edward I., to the Banastres; but, between that and 1245, the rectors of Wigan, by some means not recorded, came to be recognised as the lords of the manor, as the charter of that date is given to John Mansel. Whether this title was legally begotten, claimed as an old custom, or usurped, was a disputed point even as far back as 1277, when both parties, claiming to be patrons, went to law, and after three years' consideration of the case Robert Banastre, of Newton, was declared to be the lawful patron of the Parish Church. The judgment of these judges was disputed and revoked two generations afterwards, when the patron was declared to be Robert de Langton, son and heir of the above Robert Banastre's daughter Alice. When Robert de Clyderhou, the rector, died in 1344, John, son of John de Langton, clerk, was presented to the living by the son of the patron, John de Langton. In 1349 John de Winwick was presented to the living by the king, Edward III.

No man could be a burgess and take a leading part in local politics unless he possessed land in the borough. The burghal inhabitants were the men of wealth, and, consequently, those whose favour the king courted. Wigan was the important market town of the district, and must at this period have had improved roads into the town for the convenience of buyers and sellers. All transactions had to take place in the Market Place, otherwise they were illegal, and the merchants liable to heavy fines. The chief reason for this was that the lord of the manor should not be deprived of his tolls and dues, and that no merchant could infringe on the liberties of any other. There was neither policeman nor foot-patrol in the town, but the inhabitants were bound by an Act of Parliament (1285) to have twelve sentinels at every gate from sunset to sunrise, and if any pursuit took place they had the power of calling up the inhabitants to their assistance, that is, of raising the hue and cry. This, of course, caused much inconvenience and expense, and, consequently, the law was but laxly attended to until "justices of the peace" (from *justices de la pees*) were appointed to go from town to town to enforce its execution. The town watch was originally placed only at the gates more to prevent an attacking enemy entering than to preserve peace, to put down blackguardism, or detect thieves within. Sometimes the watch came out in grand processional order, each one with a large lantern, or cresset, at the end of a long pole. In the sixteenth century the watchman paraded the streets, called the hour, and raised

the hue and cry when chasing a thief, at which call the inhabitants were bound to come out and give chase. In case of fire the town was supplied with leather buckets and a few hand-squirts, and if a fire took place in the winter nights every householder was compelled to hang out a light from his house, so that the streets might be illuminated. It was not until the eighteenth century that lamps, with cotton wicks, were generally hung out on *very dark* nights by the chief inhabitants. The general custom was, however, for those who had occasion to go out after dark to carry each one his own lantern. Doubtless the walls at this time received all necessary repairs, as directed by Act of Parliament in the statute of Winton, or Winchester, requiring that walls should be formed round all borough towns. In the reign of Edward III. no less than three royal orders were issued for paving the villa of Wigan.—(Gregson, page 286). Such orders were necessary, for the streets were unpaved and dangerous for horse and foot passengers, and the rude carts were purposely made strong for their rugged work. There were no carriages, or vehicles, for passenger conveyance. The nobles and rich people travelled on horseback, and goods were conveyed on pack-horses. The country roads were in a most deplorable state, blocked by great boulders in some places and cut up in others by monster ruts. The river was forded by horses near the present Scholes bridge, and large stones were placed at convenient distances, as stepping-stones, for foot passengers. The poor traveller who unfortunately got benighted had either to guide his steed warily on the highway, or gallop as if in a steeplechase over ruts and rocks, regardless of the imminent danger of meeting masked robbers and being stopped by the call of "Your purse or your life." Many people lived to a good old age, without ever going five miles beyond the town boundaries. None travelled for pleasure; chapmen were the great vehicle-bearers of news and gossip. The houses were built of wood and plaster, but were of far more solid construction than those of other towns. The great beams, generally plain, though sometimes rudely carved, stood for ages. Thus the royal orders of Edward III. were crying necessities, and in answer to them the town was paved, and a bridge, for the first time, built across the Douglas at the end of Millgate Street. The country roads, too, were improved for the convenience of merchants and others attending the Wigan Fairs.

The manuscript Prayer Book, or breviary, was attached to a chain fastened in the wall of the church, and protected by a sort of cage-work, so that no person might steal the precious document, for even its market value was very great. The most learned and religious people, who could read, assembled round this, in the fifteenth century, and had the happy satisfaction of reading their own prayers.

All names and symbols have some origin, but what the origin of the Wigan

arms, or borough seal, is, it is difficult to conjecture. The inscription forming part of the seal is "Sigillum Commune Villæ et Burgi de Wigan," the common seal of the town and borough of Wigan. By the Index to Grants in Fee—Record Office, London—it seems that John Anderton was granted the custody of the lesser Seal for Statutes.—(Pat. 16th Ed. IV., No. 5. Duchy of Lancaster). John Anderton was the Clericus Communis, or Town Clerk. The Town Clerk was specially appointed by the Crown as custodian of the seal. Richard St. George, Norroy King-at-Arms, sketched at Wigan in 1613 the Wigan seal inscribed "Edward." These seals, doubtless, were, although they may or may not have been, one and the same seal, but certainly were not the seal now used by the borough. A seal was first granted to John Wynwick by royal charter from Edward III., 1349. That charter says:—"And moreover whereas there has been a frequent concourse at the said borough as well of merchants or others for the sake of trading and otherwise we have granted for us and our heirs to the said John, that he and his successors, parsons of the church aforesaid and lords of the borough aforesaid, may for ever within the said borough have a certain seal by us to be ordained of two pieces as is of custom to be used for recognizances of debts there according to the form of the statutes published for merchants, and that the greater part of the seal aforesaid may remain in the custody of the mayor or keeper of the borough aforesaid, who shall be for the time, or other private man of the greater and more discreet men of the said borough to this to be elected of the assent of the aforesaid John and his successors aforesaid if there shall not be a mayor or keeper there, and that the lesser piece of the said seal may remain in the custody of a certain clerk to be deputed by us there to this according to the form of the statutes aforesaid, and that the said mayor or keeper or other person who shall have the custody of the greater piece of the seal aforesaid and clerk may for the future receive recognizances of debts there according to the form of the same statutes." The most conspicuous part of the present seal is the representation of the old Town Hall, which was built in the time of Henry VIII., when such an architectural structure was one that the inhabitants might justly be proud of. With the exception of the dagger, flag, and cross, the seal is a true representation of the old building, and it is more reasonable to suppose that the seal was made to resemble the building than that the building was made to resemble the seal, and thus the argument is that the present one must be of a much later date than that of 1349. The added parts may have belonged to the original seal; the cross commemorating the connection of the town with the Crusaders, at the time the seal was first granted, especially in relation to the Bradshaigh family.

A more scattered race, and yet more distinct and persecuted, than the Jewish

people never existed. They were the only capitalists who followed the Conqueror from Normandy. They were driven from their own land into every country in the globe, and, like Noah's dove, could find no rest for the soles of their feet. Wherever they were allowed to live they were merely tolerated as necessary evils, for they were bankers and usurers wherever they went. They were literally hunted, like wild animals, out of France in the twelfth century. They sought refuge in England, which at all times has been a freer country than any other, even when its civilisation was at a very low ebb. They, more than any other people, have the power of hoarding up money, seemingly for the mere pleasure of having it. They spread themselves over the country wherever there was money wanted on good security, and seemed to grow rich wherever they went, although they were everywhere denied the benefit of common law. They were found in every market town in the kingdom, appropriating some special part of the town as their own, or the Jewish quarter. Their sign, the three balls, or arms of the Lombards, were conspicuously displayed from their houses, and their money hid in secret chests. Wigan being one of the most important market towns in the kingdom, had also its Jewry in what now remains as the old Jews'-yard, off Millgate. In all likelihood they, too, suffered in the Jewish massacre in the reign of Richard I., when the Jewish streets of most of our great towns are said to have been "slippery with Jewish blood." Nobles and yeomen, or tradesmen in need of ready cash, could only borrow from them, and they generally charged about 45 per cent. interest. They were frequently robbed, always hated and persecuted, and finally banished the kingdom in the reign of Edward I. (1290), and were not allowed to put foot on English soil again until the Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell.

The king was but a vassal of the Popes who often carried out of England more money than they left in it. They were more anxious about the filling of their coffers than the preaching of the Gospel. All the ecclesiastical livings in England were valued in 1291 by order of Pope Nicholas IV., and the income of the Parish Church of Wigan was then found to be £33 6s. 8d., but money had a greater market value then than now. Wheat was six shillings a quarter. A good cow cost the same price; a fat sheep was valued at one shilling; a Christmas goose was worth twopence-halfpenny, and chickens one halfpenny each. A labourer's wages were threehalfpence a day, and the price of a copy of the Bible was the same as the annual income of the Parish Church.

As already stated, the town was a city of refuge for runaway slaves, who, by reason of the feudal rights, were a very numerous class. By this means, and a long exemption from war, the population had much increased, although there is no means by which it can be even approximately stated. Extraordinary powers had been legally granted by the charter to the local governing body, although not greater than

those given to most of the other royal chartered boroughs. The Court of Common Pleas in Wigan, with its empanelled jurymen, could inflict punishments almost as severe as any royal judge. What seem barbarous customs to the present race were then common punishments. On certain convictions in some towns the prisoners were drowned. Convicts were publicly drowned in the moats round walled cities. It is not recorded that the Wigan court had the power of drowning, but it undoubtedly had the power of hanging. The powers of the court were, virtually, unlimited, and yet, because of one case of hanging, through a flagrantly illegal conviction, the borough lost its charter.

The duties, privileges, and powers of both rector and burgesses were distinctly named in the charters. The rector had no right to levy rates or customs on the burgesses, and they, amongst other duties, had to obey and enforce the laws of the land, and grant justice to all subjects of the king tried by them. For either the rector or the burgesses to infringe any of these duties, privileges, or powers was to break their part of the covenant, and so render themselves liable to the cancelling of the charter. The rector had no more right to levy a rate on bread and beer than the Stuarts had to levy the tax of ship-money without the consent of Parliament. Adam de Waleton, the rector, did levy a tax on bread and beer, and for this was liable to have the charter granted to him confiscated. He had the power of taking, trying, and imprisoning any thieves within his own fee; but he was not allowed to take them from the jurisdiction of anyone else. If the felony was committed in another fee and the felon sought refuge within his manor, he could then apprehend and try him in his own court and punish him in his own prison. De Waleton had clearly trespassed on the privileges of the charter, for he had taken assize of bread and beer, and had apprehended culprits beyond his jurisdiction; moreover, he and the burgesses of Wigan, who were jurymen in the cases cited, clearly and wilfully gave most unjust judgment. It was alleged that De Waleton and the jurymen sometimes unduly condemned and sometimes improperly acquitted felons. A case was brought to trial at Lancaster (1292), and De Waleton was arraigned before a jury of twelve knights and seven gentlemen, when a long judgment was given. Justice was said to have miscarried in the case of one Proctor, who had stolen a bull in the Wapentake of Salford, and thus beyond the jurisdiction of the Rector of Wigan. The thief was detected with the bull in his possession, and lodged by the rector's bailiffs in the prison at the Manor House without any warrant. The court was only held once every three weeks, and as it was necessary in this case to remand the accused that further evidence might be obtained, one Crowe, who was then in court, volunteered to become surety for Proctor. The bail was accepted, the prisoner discharged until next court day, three weeks after, at which time Proctor did not appear, and Crowe, the surety, was placed in the dock and tried for the

theft of the bull, and the burgesses found him guilty and hanged him accordingly. For this maladministration of justice the judge, De Waleton, was tried. An additional charge was made at the same court. Another man had stolen a tabard and sword in Preston, and was taken by the rector's bailiff, Matthew le Clerk, with the stolen goods in his possession. He was brought up for trial, but the burgesses of Wigan would not trouble themselves, although they were bound to make a thorough investigation, instead of which they dismissed the case. All the counts were proved against the accused, and the borough and its liberties were seized into the king's hands, and the suitors and burgesses held at the king's mercy. Thus the town lost the liberties and privileges which it had enjoyed for fifty-six years. They were afterwards restored on the application of John Bryn, guardian of John Banastre's lands and heir, who pleaded that De Waleton, being only rector and not patron of the parish, acted without consulting and being advised by his patron, Banastre.—(Placita de Quo Warr., p. 371, 20th Ed. I. Rot. 2d.)

Dalton on the river Douglas, near Ashurst Beacon, was held, according to the Domesday Book, by a Thane named Netred, but afterwards became the property of the lords of Manchester.—(Greslet). Robert de Holland left a knight's fee in Dalton and Parbold, of the barony of Manchester, to Burscough Priory. In 46th Edward III. the manor, or part of it, was held by Sir Robert de Holland, as of the barony of Manchester, and, in the same year, Thomas de Formeby and Alianora, his wife, sued Thomas Marchell for one-fourth of the manor of Dalton, then known as Lathom. In the reign of Edward V. Formeby's heir, who afterwards died of a wound received at Agincourt, possessed the estates by his marriage with Joan, daughter and heiress of Sir Gilbert Haydock. His descendant, Peter Legh, held the manor in 20th Henry VIII., and it was in the possession of Sir Peter Leigh in the 12th Charles I. Ashurst Hall, a large castellated edifice, now used as a farm-house, existed in 1640, at the commencement of the great rebellion. In the Parliamentary list of sequestrations of property in Lancashire of 1643 the name of William Ashurst occurs. Thomas Ashurst was high sheriff of the county in 1694, and William Ashurst, judge of the Court of the King's Bench, was his descendant. The property was sold by Henry Ashurst in 1751 to Sir Thomas Bootle.

I think it well to conclude this chapter with some appropriate particulars of a few of the local families of this period whose representatives are still in the neighbourhood. The information is chiefly taken from their published pedigrees.

No family in this neighbourhood, and very few in England, can trace their pedigrees so far back as the Gerards of Bryn can. Several of their ancestors were married to the daughters of Welsh Princes. They were distinguished for their gallantry in war in the conflicts in France, Ireland, Wales, and Scotland, and the

civil wars of England. They derive their origin from Otho, a rich and powerful lord in the time of King Alfred, who was descended from the Dukes of Tuscany, and, according to Dugdale, was a baron of England in the 16th year of Edward the Confessor. Success attended their family prowess in England and Wales. Walter Fitz Otho, Castellan of Windsor, appointed Warden of the Forest of Berkshire, in which county he had two lordships, as well as twenty-six in other counties, married Gladys, daughter of Rhiwallon ap Cynfyn, Prince of North Wales. Their youngest son, Gerald, or Gerard, Constable of Pembroke Castle, married Nesta, the daughter of Rees, son of Theodore, the Great Prince of South Wales. Their eldest son, Maurice Fitz Gerald, crossed with the Earl of Pembroke to Ireland in 1170, and there distinguished himself as a soldier. William Gerard in the time of Edward II. married Joan, the daughter of Peter de Bryn, of Brynhill, of this county, and had issue one son, Sir Peter Gerard de Bryn, Knight of Kingsley and Bryn.

No local old family has had a more eventful existence than that of Standish. The pedigree is traced back to the commencement of the thirteenth century. Members of the family have been connected with all the important annals of the county and revolutions of the country, and, although sometimes the bitter foes of the reigning dynasties, they have generally been staunch adherents of the Crown and Catholic Church. The lives of the sons named "Ralph" are especially notable. Sir Ralph de Standish usurped the estates of his eldest brother. He had a grant of free pardon under the privy seal for all offences and breaches of the peace, dated 10th April, 1352. Ralph de Standish in 1398, only six years after he had been Sheriff of Lancashire, had a grant of free pardon from the crown. Another Ralph took an active part in favour of the house of York, and had two pardons granted him from Henry VI. In 1485 (1st Henry VII.) Ralph Standish, of Standish Hall, had a general pardon from the crown, after which he lived 53 years. He died in 1538, aged 80 years.

The influential and highly-respected families of Woodcock and Bankes are descendants of John de Hulme, or Holme, who was resident in Winstanley in the time of Richard II. Like all old families, they can claim distinctions for many of their ancestors, especially on the battle-field and in the church. The Woodcocks were united by marriage to the Holmes in 1799, when Elizabeth, fourth and youngest daughter of Edward Holme, was married to Thomas Woodcock, Esq., founder of the Wigan Bank. Geoffrey de Hulme, Knight, eldest son and heir of Thomas de Hulme, of Hulme Hall, is mentioned as tenant of Hulme, in the roll of those holdings under the Earl of Lancaster in 1311. Robert de Hulme, his brother, was one of the Lancashire gentlemen who made an oath at Preston in 1350, before Thomas de Seton and others, touching certain differences between Roger le Ware, Lord of Manchester, and the bailliff of the Duke of Lancaster. Sir William

or Ralph de Hulme, Knight, nephew of the above-named Geoffrey, distinguished himself in the French wars, under the Black Prince, by whom he was knighted. He afterwards served in Spain, and was sent as ambassador to the Court of Castile.

The ffaringtons of Worden and Ribbleton have been distinguished in the church, in law, and in war, and are at present locally represented by Richard Atherton ffarington, Esq., of Mariebonne House, Banker, Major of the 4th Lancashire Rifle Volunteers. He was born 27th August, 1837; married 24th April, 1868, to Everilda Mary, third daughter of Henry Woodcock, Esq., Wigan, and of Bolnore, co. Sussex. According to old documents the spelling of the family name varies very much, and that sometimes when written by the same individual, commencing with F, Ph, or ff, and almost invariably with ff in black letter documents. In their pedigrees before the time of Edward II. they are also styled De Mealis. The not unusual custom of adopting the father's Christian name, with the addition of Fitz, meaning the son of, is frequently resorted to. Hugo de Mealis had a son called John Fitz Hugo, whose son was named John de Farington. From the time of Edward II. to the present the name Farington, or ffarington, has been adhered to. In 1349 Edward III. confirmed a right of free warren on William Farington, and also granted him a licence to make a park in Leyland. In 1359-60 the same William entailed on his younger sons, John, Thomas, and Nicholas, the estates of Northbrook. His eldest son and heir, Sir William, is supposed to be the Farington mentioned in Froissart's chronicles as having served under Edward III. in the French wars in the expedition of John of Ghent, the first Duke of Lancaster, to recover Castile in 1360. In the 22nd year of Richard II. he held one-half of the manor of Leyland, and John of Ghent the other moiety. He had four sons, the eldest of whom died without issue, and the estates passed to his second son, John.

The Thicknesses of Beech Hill, Lancashire, distinguished in the Wigan Parliamentary electioneering conflicts of the last generation, belonged to a family of great antiquity. They were descended from Robert Thicknesse, who was Lord of Barterley, or Balterley, in Staffordshire, in 1274, an estate which was held from father to son for 500 years. Ralph Thicknesse, the only male representative of the family, was drowned in Windermere Lake, 13th September, 1853, and the Rev. Francis Henry Coldwell, the husband of his sister Anne, assumed by royal licence, in 1859, the surname and arms of Thicknesse. They have issue five sons and one daughter.

CHAPTER V.

*Missing Rectors—Pympton—Fulshaigh—The Bankes of Winstanley—Upholland—
Monasteries—First M.P.'s and their Payments—Clyderhou—Wycliffe's Opinion of
Parsons—Charter Restored—Clyderhou's Father.*

FROM the combined information derived from the lists of rectors which I have seen, the first three are John de Mansel, who was rector before 1249, when he granted his parish charter; Adam de Waleton, rector in 1292, when he was tried at Lancaster, and lost the borough charter; and then Robert de Clyderhou, who was instituted to the living on 22nd September, 1303. It is very evident that, during that period, there must have been other rectors; and I now submit to the reader two names more, with my reasons for presuming that they were rectors in that period. Frederick Peake, Esq., of London, has, amongst other charters belonging to the Standish family, one from William, the son of William de Standish, to — Pympton, chaplain of Wigan, in which William de Standish is a witness. The charter is dated 28th Edward I., that is, ten years after the disgrace of De Waleton. There was only one church in Wigan, and that All Saints', with which Pympton must have been connected, and, although he is only here called chaplain, he may, nevertheless, have been rector. Although the rectors often absented themselves for very long periods, I believe he was neither a mere *locum tenens* nor a priest after the order of the modern curate. Had he held any subordinate ecclesiastical position he would not have been recognised by such a high family as that of the Standishes, especially in the matter of an important charter. The Standishes were one of the most wealthy and aristocratic families of the neighbourhood at this period, and held many possessions in the borough of Wigan itself. I consider therefore that Pympton may not unreasonably be placed as rector in 1299. Moreover, I think that from these same charters a second missing link is obtained. In the fourteenth century there were, independent of the *pro tem.* rector, Henry de Chaddesden, eight rectors of Wigan; so that each held the living on an average of less than thirteen years, and the likelihood is that between De Mansel and De Clyderhou there were at least three

rectors. Although curates of modern times, simply because they wear the broadcloth, generally have their choice of the best marriageable ladies of their district, it was not so in olden times, when they were poor and without prospects, and when heroes or men of family alone were chosen as husbands. In 1309, not a clergyman, but a clergyman's son, Henry, son of Richard Fulshaigh, married Mabel, daughter of Jordan de Standish. This Richard Fulshaigh had been clergyman of Wigan, and bestowed extensive estates on the young couple and their heirs, reserving only his town (Wigan) house of Bremlegh and adjacent gardens. To this matrimonial agreement Henry Waleys, rector of the church of Standish, was a witness. A clergyman of such wealth, influence, and social position could scarcely have been less than the rector himself. Against this statement must, however, be placed the fact that De Clyderhou was made rector six years before, yet it is not improbable that this Richard Fulshaigh may have resigned. Five rectors certainly did resign the living, and he may have done so too. This would make the first five rectors of Wigan to be Mansel, Waleton, Pympton, Fulshaigh, and Clyderhou. Amongst these Standish charters it may be here mentioned there is another of 3rd Edward II., from William of Wigan to William, the son of Jordan de Standish, of all his estates, real and personal, in Wigan, as well as one by which William, son of Jordan de Standish, father of the above-named Mabel, enfeoffs William, the son of Nicholas of Wigan, and Matilda, his wife, in all the lands, &c., which had been conveyed to him by Richard de Ince, and Alice, his wife. According to the usual custom these charters were published by affixing copies of them on the Parish Church doors. All claims and rights to these estates were relinquished by Edmund Fulshaigh, the son of Henry and Mabel, by a specially published charter in 1358. The witnesses to the deed, or charter, were Gilbert de Ince, Richard de Huyton, William de Bradshaigh, William de Assheton, Henry de Pemberton, and others, all of which names are still preserved in Wigan and the neighbouring townships. To this charter is attached "a small seal of red wax, very perfect, and from a very beautifully-cut matrix. It bears a ram's head, and the inscription round it appears to be as follows, but the letters are very small and not very clear:—SI. SALLIDONIS. LE. CHOFEARE." (Local Gleanings.) Nearly all the charters of the Standish family were drawn up and dated at Wigan, which shows that attorneys then, as now, were an important and prosperous class in the borough.

The marriage ceremony at this time, and until the reign of Edward VI., did not take place before the altar, as now, but in the porch of the church, or before the church door—a custom common to rich and poor. There, too, christening and funeral ceremonies took place, and it was considered the only place where a marriage dower could be lawfully assigned. Selden says, in his *Uxor Hebraica*, Opera III., p.

680, "Neque alibi quam in facie ecclesiæ et ad ostium ecclesiæ, atque ante desponsationem in initio contractus (ut juris consultus nostri veteres aiunt) sic fundi dos legitimè assignari potuit." The ceremony gone through at the porch was really the same as that of the present day before the altar, only the language was somewhat more quaint and expressive. According to this custom was the marriage, *ad ostium ecclesiæ*, in the 13th year of Edward I. (1285), of Henry Fulshaigh to Mabel Standish at Wigan Parish Church. In connection with this custom Chaucer says, in his "Wife of Bath :"—

"She was a worthy woman all her life;
Husbands at the church door had she five."

The Bankes of Winstanley and the Woodcocks of Wigan are the local descendants of Robert de Holland, who, about 1300, built Upholland Church, in the Wigan parish, and dedicated it to St. Thomas (Thomas à Becket) beside his castle. The latter has entirely disappeared, and only insignificant ruins of the former remain. This church was made into a priory of Benedictine monks, and largely endowed with estates in Holland, Orrell, &c. The priory was established because of the disagreements of the canons and the neglect of public worship. There were originally twelve monks, but at the time of the sequestrations of church possessions in the reign of Henry VIII. there were in the establishment five ecclesiastics and twenty-six servants, and the valuation, according to the reliable Dugdale, was £61 3s. 4d. per annum. The priory was sold in 1546 to John Holcroft for £344 12s. In 1307 De Holland received special permission to fortify his castle, but most of his estates were afterwards confiscated; an attempt was made to recover them by force, and in 1377 the family is recorded to be again in peaceable possession of all. Upholland was the property of Stenrulf, the Saxon, and was afterwards given to De Greslet, baron of Manchester; it was then owned by the Hollands, and in 1717 was sold to the Ashurst family by Lady Ashburnham; finally it was purchased from Ashurst by Sir Thomas Bootle, whose descendant, the Earl of Lathom, now owns it.

Monasteries and abbeys were raised all over the country. Rich laymen founded chantries as private gates to heaven, and many monasteries and abbeys were founded by ambitious priests merely as commercial speculations, much as people now-a-days build limited liability palatial hotels. Of course, many were the fruits of honest religious zeal, although their monks and abbots were zealous because zeal re-paid them. The working bees of these hives—the monks—often did the work of the most degraded menials, but the heads were kings and queens that revelled in extravagant luxuriousness. Their solemn countenances before the duped public became jovial within the walls, and licentious pleasure beamed in their rubicund faces. Their larders, cellars, and coffers were well filled. The miseries of this life were unseen at their private boards. Still, whether monasteries were commercial or celestial speculations,

they did much good, for they suited the tastes, creeds, and necessities of the age. No matter how good or great the work meant to benefit the public may be, it will fall useless to the ground if unsuitable to the age. Many reforms might be enacted in all governments, and the necessity for them may be observed by far-seeing men, but he would be a bad politician and a failure who attempted to introduce them before the country was in a fit state to receive them. Many persons of finely-cultivated tastes now deplore the depravities of the British stage; but the managers are not to blame, for they but cater to the public taste, and they, the best judges, declare that to represent the high-class drama is but to court insolvency, which they cannot reasonably be expected to do to please even the refined minority. So, too, however great or numerous the failings of the monastic system may have been, or however much now deplored, they were the necessities of the age. They appropriated the rich benefices of the age, which, although dens of corruption and shows of deception, were nevertheless the Unions—*houses of religious correction*, seminaries of learning, and colleges of art and science. Young men were there trained in the doctrines and art of mediæval superstitions and religion; and devotees made pilgrimages to them with their Peter's pence and first-fruits, and were treated in return to a peep at some weeping, or eye-rolling, saints, and the benediction of the Pope's vicar. By some strange perversion human nature can think of sanguinary battles as glorious victories, and so the tastes of the monastic period declared these to be noble institutions and the abode of virtue, pious prayer, and nothing more, until times and customs changed and the reaction set in, when they were believed to be all that was villainous and unholy.

Patriotism in uncivilised countries or inferior powers develops itself into military actions. Selfishness is a deeply-grounded principle of human nature, yet no true man seeks his individual interest with greater zeal than he shows for the maintenance or accumulation of his country's glory and greatness. In the early stages of civilisation, before the national intellect has been developed, physical force must determine the position of a country, and every man's force is absorbed by the national body which is directed to defence or defiance. Every man feels that his power is a necessary unit in the support of his country, so he proudly does his duty. In an advanced state of civilisation, however, physical force gives place to the matured intellectual capabilities of the nation, and patriotic, become intellectual, conflicts, so that distinguished statesmen are as much the heroes of modern history as field-marshal were of the ancient. Nothing makes a man more patriotic than giving him a share, however small, in the government of his country. Human nature is gratified by the responsibility of being trusted with honour, and one who has any share in making a law will be certain to maintain it. Thus every enfranchised Englishman,

as a part of the English government, is patriotic to a degree. If to be so insignificant a unit of the Constitution be an honour, how much more so must it be to be the representative of a constituency or the leader of a party? It is an honour from which none are restricted, at which many aim, yet which few attain. It is an expensive social luxury, full of dignity and importance. The Constitution has been the slowly-developed work of Englishmen, and every man is proud to represent it in the House. Charter after charter of dearly-purchased liberty has been granted, and the king compelled to vow, "We will sell to no man, we will deny or delay to no man, either justice or right."—(*Magna Charta*).

There were great constitutional changes in the reign of Edward I., chiefly in that the sovereign could not levy any tax without the consent of Parliament, which, of course, the Commons took great advantage of by refusing to vote supplies until the king granted their wish. Many rich and influential towns were for the first time requested to send up representatives whom the borough or county represented had to pay. In 1295 Wigan was one of these one hundred and twenty towns. The writ was addressed to the sheriff of the county, and ran thus:—"Because we desire to have a conference and treaty with the earls, barons, and other great men of our kingdom, to provide remedies against the dangers the same kingdom is in at this time, therefore we have commanded them, that they be with us at Westminster on the next Sunday after the feast of St. Martin, in winter next coming, to treat, ordain, and do, so as those dangers may be prevented. We command and firmly enjoin thee that, without delay, thou dost cause to be chosen, and to come to us at the time and place aforesaid, two knights of the counties aforesaid; and of every city, two citizens; and of every burgh, two burgesses, of the most discreet and fit for business: so as the said knights may have sufficient power for themselves and the community of the county aforesaid; and the said citizens and burgesses may have the same power, separately for themselves and the community of cities and burghs, then to do in the premises what shall be ordained by the common council, so that for defect of such power the business aforesaid may not remain undone, and have then the names of the knights, citizens, and burgesses, and this writ. Witness the king at Canterbury, the third of October."—(*Oldfield's Hist. House of Com., I., 177*). This mandate of the king calling for burghal representatives was really a royal stratagem, meant to please the people with feelings of self-importance, so that in their moments of self-adulation the representatives themselves, chosen from the leading towns, might support measures for taxing their own constituencies as good precedents of loyal feeling, for the king had already failed to draw sufficient money from them. The four ancient boroughs—Lancaster, Preston, Wigan, and Liverpool—were the only towns in the county called upon to return members, and William Teinterer and Henry

le Bocher were returned for Wigan at the wages of two shillings a day, which they were paid on their return, after showing their briefs (as a proof that they had done their duty), given by Sir John de Kirkeby at the king's command. The feelings of the importance of being represented in Parliament grew feeble as the expense increased, and the benefits derived decreased with the growing exactions of tyrannical kings. So indifferent and callous had the people become that the sheriff called on the town to send two members to Parliament, but neither did the burgesses show any alacrity in their choice, nor were willing candidates easily found. To merchants it was a loss of time, which to them was money, and by few was it then considered an honour, whilst the burghers considered it a profitless luxury which they most grudgingly paid for, and sought by all means to evade. Every year the members became fewer and fewer, and some burghs even bought themselves from their enforced privilege. So burdensome was it to some towns, and so anxious were they to be rid of it, that during a hundred years, from the reign of Edward I. to that of Henry VI., the sheriffs of Lancashire actually refused to return the names of any of the boroughs, because "of their poverty," or, as one replied, "There is no city in the county of Lancaster;" and, doubtless, the burgesses of Wigan were thankful to their sheriffs. Whether they were or not, it is certain that no representative was returned for Wigan after Simon Payer and John le Merser were returned in 1306, until, in 1547 Alexander Barlow and Giles Carus were returned for the then prosperous borough.

With the advance of civilisation grows the desire for intellectual cultivation. Those who are not themselves gifted with tact or talent sufficient to beget distinction strive to cling as closely as possible to some rising genius of the age, so that they may thus be thrown at least into the brilliance of reflected glory, or that their names may descend, like those of many artists, in the skirts of the garments of the great. Displays of physical strength were long the only source of lasting glory, and consequently great men were oftener found in the field than in intellectual circles. Parliament was supplied from amongst the undemonstrative and unambitious, who, intellectually advanced beyond their age, longed for what others considered ephemeral ideas or a political millenium. Money-making burgesses could not afford to give up their mercantile chances for thankless parliamentary drudgery, and men of ambition saw glory only in the coat of mail. But the introduction of printing changed all this, and produced a revolution in men's motives and careers, and then intellectual guides were more honoured than field-m Marshals. The Senate House became the centre of a natural political system, which had its satellites of genius, with their intellectual planets and fixed stars that became visible only by their borrowed light. The infantile giant Press reflected the light of wit, humour, and wisdom until the interest of the whole country was

attracted, and many pressed to get into the very centre of light with the hope of being an honour to their country and a credit to themselves. The most insignificant borough in the kingdom was a gateway to the political arena. The wicket-gates had grown rusty on their despised hinges, but then there was a rush to get through, and thousands wished to enter where only one could pass. Political princes purchased boroughs and passed their sons or friends into the magic circle. There were bulls and bears on the political 'change. Prices were high, because the eager candidates were many. For 240 years Wigan despised its privilege, returned no member to Parliament; and yet, in the eighteenth century, the Duke of Portland paid £20,000 to become patron of the borough. The Wigan burgesses had the power of creating life burgesses, just as the Government have the power of creating life peers to extend their influence in the House of Lords.

This simply meant the demand of a higher price from the opposed candidate. Boroughs were bought and sold, like advowsons, and, although illegal, the purchase was winked at by the law, encouraged by ministers, and maintained by custom. Men of no local influence often sat for the borough simply because the purse-strings were controlled by the patron. Money put the member in at one election, and a higher bidder threw him out at the next. Votes were the birthright of the burgesses, and they expected parliamentary annuities for them. Men of the highest distinction and capability have sat for Wigan—viscounts, earls, barons, knights, and distinguished citizens. Soldiers, sailors, and civilians, high in their respective orders, have represented it. Its members have specially been distinguished for legal knowledge and attainments. Ministers of the crown and judges of the kingdom have served it. There were many fierce struggles and keen competitions in the old days of the hustings, when opposition was not confined to pugnacious menaces and violent speeches. Every force was brought to bear on the elections by both parties. Law was disrespected for the time by the candidate for the Legislature, and the electors were a law unto themselves. Degenerate custom, riding in the chariots of bribery and corruption, was the undisputed rule of the campaign.

The name of the son of the first M.P. for Wigan occurs as one of the principals in the following Culcheth deed, showing that he held property in Scholes:—Monday after the Feast of the Assumption, 3rd Edward II. (22nd August, 1309), Henry Fitz William le Teinterer grants to Gilbert de Culcheth a loft in Wigan, lying in Scholes, to hold of the lord of the town of Wigan and his successors. The witnesses to the deeds are Richard de Ines, Adam de Bradshaigh, John Gilybrond, John de la Croye, John de Byrkened, William Bussel, John Fitz Hugh le Merienar, William Fitz Wala and Hugh, *the Clerk*. The five following Culcheth deeds of this period are also of local interest:—

XXXIX.—At Hyndeleghe, Friday after the Epiphany, 1320. *William fitz Thomas de la Hyndeleghe* grants to *John le . . .* his uncle, and the heirs of his body, land and buildings in Hyndeleghe, which the grantor had from his father *Thomas*, who hold them of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem.—Witnesses: *Gilbert de Culcheth*, *Richard de Ines*, *Richard del Stanistreet*, *Henry Lowe*, *William Tinctore*.

XL.—Sunday after the Feast of St. Dunstan, the Archbishop 16th Ed. II. (1322). *Adam fitz Margery de Hyndeleghe* grants to *William fitz Thomas le Duk* and *Margery* (the daughter of *John*, the son of *Henry*, the son of *Sylbe*), wife of the said *William*, and the heirs of their bodies, all the lands he had by the feoffment of the said *William* in Hyndeleghe; remainder to the heirs of the body of *William*, remainder to the said *John fitz Henry fitz Sylbe* in fee.—Witnesses: *Richard le Ines*, *Gilbert de Culcheth*, *Adam de Bradshaigh*, *Richard del Stanistreet*, *Hugh de Thursekar*, *Hugh*, the clerk.

XLI.—Friday after St. Nicholas' Day, 1322. *Richard fitz Adam fitz Richard*, being full of age, demises to *Gilbert de Ockelshaghe* a piece of land in Hyndley, the same which *Hawota*, the Miller's widow, held. To hold for nine years.—Witnesses: *Richard de Ines*, *William de Asseton* [Ashton], *Richard de Stanystrete*, *Hugh le Jew*, *William Tinctore*, *Hugh*, the clerk.

XLII.—Wyndhul. Friday next after St. Mark's Day, 1324. *Robert de Hyndeleghe* grants to *Geoffrey de Urmeston* and *Margery*, Robert's daughter, and the heirs of their bodies lawfully issuing all his lands in Winstanley, Eccleston, and Glest, called Blakhil, &c.—Witnesses: *Gilbert de Sotheworth* (then sheriff), *Gilbert de Haydok*, *Adam de Kenyan*, *Richard de Ines*, *Richard de Wulstan*, *Henry de Athirton*, *William fitz Richard de Urmeston*, *Hugh*, the clerk.

XLIII.—Friday in the week of Pentecost, 18th Ed. II., 1324. *Margery*, who was the wife of *William fitz Thomas le Duk*, of Hindley, in her pure widowhood, gives to *John fitz Henry*, her father, all the lands and buildings which she and her husband had by the feoffment of *Adam fitz Margery de Hyndeleghe* in Hindley.—Witnesses: *Richard de Ines*, *Gilbert de Culcheth*, *Adam de Bradeshaghe*, *Richard de Stanistrete*, *Hugh de Thursekar*, *Hugh le Jew*, *Hugh*, the clerk.

The priests were the only men of any learning of the age, and therefore there was a demand for their services in secular employments, from which the emoluments were often very considerable, and it is not to be wondered at that Wycliffe had good occasion to remark, "Our priests be so busy about worldly occupations that they seem to be better bailiffs or reeves than godly priests of Jesus Christ." Henry, Earl of Leicester, whose rebellion Clyderhou secretly, and by public preaching, fostered and furthered, had in his gift several important legal and lay appointments, and by his means the rector of Wigan, his adherent Clyderhou, was appointed a Clerk in Chancery, which office he held for thirty years, by which he was much enriched. But success brings success and wealth accumulates wealth, and so we find the already successful and wealthy lord of Wigan receiving other lucrative appointments. He was the king's escheator for that part of England lying between the river Trent and London, and seemingly for the North of England at the same time, for, although no one was allowed to hold his escheatorship for more than one year, several mandates are found requiring Robert de Clyderhou to act both north and south of the Trent. These commands directed him as king's escheator to take into the king's hand as escheats the manors, estates, lands, and occasionally the goods and chattels of persons therein named. He is last named as "escheator beyond Trent" in the ninth year of Edward II. (1316), when he was appointed to the living of Gargrave. He was

appointed to the abbey and convent of Sawley, 23rd September, 1316, but if that was not simply as *locum tenens* he must have been again promoted, as he was in less than a year (April 22nd, 1317) succeeded by Sir Adam de Armyn.

By way of corroborating Wycliffe's statement, it may be related that William de Blackburn had taken possession of certain lands belonging to Robert de Clyderhou, consisting of eight acres of land and three *rodes* of meadow, with appurtenances, in Dutton; but Robert was a clerk in the king's court at Lancaster, and knew something of law and the acuteness of lawyers, so he managed to recover these lands in 1301-2. Having been successful in recovering the *seizin* of one property, he made bold to lay legal claim to another, then held by William, son of Nicholas de Mitton, and consisting of one messuage, of 10 acres of land, half an acre of meadow, and fourpence of rent, with appurtenances, in Acton (Aighton); and in this also he was successful.—(Ab. Rot. Orig., vol. I., p. 124, Rot. 17). In 1312 he received a grant of free warren of Salisbury. In 1313-14, amongst the Great Fines, there is an entry to the effect that "Robert de Cliderhou, parson of the Church of Wigan, made fine with the king for five marks (£3 6s. 8d.) to have confirmation of a certain charter."—(Ibid, p. 207, b. Rot. 19). In 1329-30, by charter, there was granted to him a market and fair at Wigan.—(Cal. Rot. Charter, p. 161 b). In 1330-31 he made a fine in 20 marks (£13 6s. 8d.) to have license for assigning his manor of Bayley to the abbot and monks of Cockersand.—(Ab. Rot. Orig., vol. II., p. 47 b, Great Fines). From the rolls of Reddisseisins (1333-4), and within a year of his death, he, in the court of the king at Clyderhou recovered his *seizin* against Adam, son of Hugh de Clyderhou, and John, son of Hugh de Clayton, of 36 acres of land, six acres of wood, six acres of meadow, and the eighth part of a mill, with appurtenances, in Clyderhou and Dynkdeleye.—(Ib., p. 82, b Rot. 33).

While the brave, warlike, and sagacious Edward I. was lying on his death-bed at Burgh-in-Sands, near Carlisle, in 1307, his soldiers were still practising the art of war, often in friendly, though mortal, combats. But the work of the assassin was as common as the display of the gallantry of the knight. Whilst Robert de Clyderhou, with a regiment of the king's soldiers, was stationed at Bayley, he was assaulted by the force and arms of three brothers—Ralph, William, and Geoffrey de Bradehull, and was killed. The same Robert is supposed to have been the father of the celebrated Wigan parson and treason-priest by proxy. The three brothers were tried at Westminster, found guilty, and fined £200.—(*Placitorum Abbreviatio*, p. 300, b.) On the site at Bayley, where his father fell, Robert de Clyderhou founded a chantry, which was only demolished in 1830 to give place to improvements.

In 1292, for the maladministration of justice by the burgesses and De Waleton, the lord of the manor, Wigan lost its liberties, but on the representations of John

Bryn the prohibition was withdrawn and the rights again fully restored to Robert de Clyderhou in 1314. It was a year of disaster and distress to the whole nation. The battle of Bannockburn was lost, the miseries of famine were working havoc among the rich and poor, barons were unable to maintain their retainers, who, reduced to the saddest straits of distress and despair, became robbers and highwaymen. They pillaged the rich, and the honest poor were compelled to live on the meanest food, for every town was reduced by the dreadful siege of famine until herbs, horses, and dogs were considered savoury food by those fortunate enough to find them. The exchequer of the king was empty, and money was wanted to carry on war and supply the wants of a riotous sovereign. The whole country was discontented, and Edward was compelled to seek the favour of his subjects, and, therefore, granted liberties to several opulent towns. This state of affairs, coupled with the intercession of Bryn, was the means of restoring to Wigan its original charter for five marks. The mayor was immediately called upon to provide the king with money upon the security of his private domains and eight per cent. interest, although the legal interest for loans then was 45 per cent. Amongst the witnesses to this charter were the Earl of Hereford, who was afterwards slain while attempting to cross the river after the battle of Boroughbridge, and Hugh le Despenser, the obnoxious favourite of the king. For twenty-one years had the borough rights been suspended, and the burgesses held at the king's mercy. Twenty-one years of political disgrace! Twenty-one years of anxious daily wonderment as to what should really happen! Surely the keenness of the reproach and the anxiety of burghal despair had worn away. The town has since then frequently longed for, and, at the same time, feared a Royal Commission. In the heat of political disappointment petitions have been presented by disappointed parties, who, in their calmer moments, have looked tremulously at the foreboding results. Guilty bribers have trembled at the very thought of exposure and their unhappy connection with stern and resolute law, while innocent voters have mourned over the prospective loss of the borough franchise. Five times have petitions been made from Wigan. From 1292 to 1314 Wigan first suffered for its political pollution, and no doubt the confirmation and ratification of the Royal Charter in 1314 was hailed with as great delight as the authenticated news of "No Commission" in 1882 was to modern bribers whose consciences had been pent up in anxious despair.

My original intention was not to give a full copy of the charter of the 7th Edward II. (1314), as the greater part of it merely recites, verbatim, the whole of the first charter, and only confirms the same. It is the same with every one of the first six charters; each one recites every one previously granted, and adds a little more, and thus a copy of the sixth charter contains six charters. The

original parchment is in the Town Clerk's Office in a good state of preservation, but only a small portion of the seal now adheres to the attached cord. As, however, exceedingly few persons have seen the charter, I here place a copy of it and its translation before the public:—

7th EDWARDI II.

“Edwardus Dei gratia Rex Angliæ Dominus Hiberniæ et Dux Aquitanniæ Archiepiscopis Episcopis Abbatibus Prioribus Comitibus Baronibus Justiciariis Vicecomitibus Præpositis Ministris et omnibus Ballivis et Fidelibus suis Salutem: Inspeximus Cartam quam celebris memoriæ Dominus. Henricus quondam Rex Angliæ Avus noster fecit Johanni Mansel dudum Parsonæ Ecclesiæ de Wygan in hæc Verba: Henricus Dei gratia Rex Angliæ Dominus Hiberniæ Dux Normanniæ Aquitanniæ et Comes d’Andes Archiepiscopis Episcopis Abbatibus Prioribus Comitibus Baronibus Justiciariis Vicecomitibus Præpositis Ministris et omnibus Ballivis et Fidelibus suis Salutem: Sciatis nos concessisse et hac Carta nostra confirmasse et nobis et Hæredibus nostris dilecto et fideli nostro Johanni Mansel Parsonæ Ecclesiæ de Wygain quod Villa sua de Wygayn Burgus sit imperpetuum et quod Burgenses ejusdem Burgi habeant Gildam Mercatoriam cum Hansa et aliis libertatibus et liberis consuetudinibus ad Gildam illam pertinentibus Et quod nullus qui non sit de Gilda illa Mercandisam aliquam in prædicto Burgo faciat nisi de voluntate eorundem Burgensium Concessimus etiam eisdem Burgensibus et eorum Hæredibus quod habeant Soke et Sak et Thol, et Theam, et Attachiamantum infra Burgum prædictum es Infangenthef et Utfangenthef, et quod quieti sint per totam Terram nostram et per omnes portus Marit de Thelonio Lestagio Passagio Pontagio et Stallagio Et quod nullam Secutionem Comitatum seu Wapentachiorum faciant de Tenuris suis quas tenent infra Burgum prædictum—Concessimus etiam eisdem Burgensibus et eorum Hæredibus quod quicunque Mercatores petierint Burgum prædictum cum Mercandis suis de quocunque loco fuerint sive extranei sive alii qui de pace nostra fuerint vel de Licentia nostra in terram nostram venerint salvo et secure ad prædictum Burgum veniant cum Mercandis suis et salvo ibidem morentur et salvo inde recedant faciendo inde rectas et debitas Consuetudines Prohibemus etiam ne quis prædictis Burgensibus injuriam vel dampnum seu molestiam faciat super forisfacturam nostram decem Librarum.—QUARE volumus et firmiter præcipimus pro nobis et Hæredibus nostris quod prædicta Villa de Wygayn liber Burgus sit imperpetuum et quod prædicti Burgenses habeant prædictam Gildam mercatoriam cum Hansa et cum aliis Libertatibus et liberis Consuetudinibus ad Gildam illam pertinentibus et quod habeant omnes alias libertates et liberas Consuetudines et Quietantias sicut prædictum est:—Hujus Testibus *Ricardo Comite Cornubense fratre nostro*, Rogero de Pygot Comite Norfolcense, Petro de Saband, Willhelmo de Ferrariis, Radulpho Fit Nichol, Willhelmo de Cantilupo, Johanne de Plessset, Paulino Peyner, Roberto de Mustengros, Bartholomæo Peché et aliis. Datum per Manum nostram apud Wodestok vicesimo sexto die Augusti Anno Regni nostri tricesimo: Nos autem Concessionem Confirmationem et Prohibitionem prædictas ratas habentes et gratas eas pro nobis et hæredibus nostris quantum in nobis est, dilecto Clerico nostro Roberto de Clyderhou nunc Parsonæ Ecclesiæ prædictæ et Successoribus suis Parsonis ejusdem Ecclesiæ et Burgensibus Burgi prædicti Concedimus et confirmamus sicut Carta prædicta rationabiliter testatur et prout prædictus Robertus et Prædecessores sui Parsonæ Ecclesiæ prædictæ ac Burgenses prædicti et eorum Antecessores libertatibus prædictis a tempore Confectionis Cartæ prædictæ huc usque uti sunt rationabiliter et gavisii.—Hujus Testibus Gilberto de Clare Comite Gloucester et Hereford, Humfrido de Bohun Comite Hereford et Essex, Adamaro de Valencia Comite Pembrock, Hugone le Despencer Edmundo de Malolacu Senescallo Hospitii nostri et aliis. Data per Manum nostram apud Novum Monasterium Septimo Die Junii Anno Regni nostri Septimo.—GULLING.”

7TH EDWARD II.—(1314).

"Edward, by the Grace of God, King of England, Lord of Ireland, and Duke of Aquitain. To all archbishops, bishops, abbots, priors, earls, barons, justices, sheriffs, chief ministers, and bailiffs, and his faithful subjects Greeting: We have inspected the charter which the Lord Henry of renowned memory, formerly King of England, our grandfather, made to John Mansel, late parson of the Church of Wigan, in these words: Henry, by the Grace of God, King of England, Lord of Ireland, Duke of Normandy Acquitain, and Count of Angers. To all archbishops, bishops, abbots, priors, earls, barons, justices, sheriffs, chief ministers, and bailiffs, and his faithful subjects Greeting. Know ye that we have granted and by this our charter confirmed for us and our heirs to our beloved and faithful John Mansel, parson of the Church of Wigan, that his Vill of Wigan may be a borough for ever, and that the burgesses of the same borough may have a Guild Merchant, with a treasury and other liberties and free customs to that Guild belonging, and that no one who is not of that Guild may make any merchandise in the aforesaid borough, unless of the will of the same burgesses. We have also granted to the same burgesses and their heirs that they may have soke and sak and thol and theam and attachment within the said borough and infangenthef and utfangenthef, and that they may be free throughout our whole land and through all the ports of the sea from toll, custom, passage, pontage, and stallage, and that they may make no suit of the Counties or Wapentakes concerning their tenures which they hold within the borough aforesaid. We have also granted to the same burgesses and their heirs, that whatsoever traders shall come to the borough aforesaid with their merchandises, of whatsoever place they shall be, foreigners or others, who shall be of our peace or of our leave shall come into our land, may come safely and securely to the aforesaid borough with their merchandises and safely there may stay and safely from thence may return by doing there the right and due customs; we do also prohibit that no one may do injury or damage or molestation unto the aforesaid burgesses upon our forfeiture of £10. Wherefore we do will and firmly command for us and our heirs that the aforesaid Vill of Wigan be a borough for ever, and that the aforesaid burgesses may have the aforesaid Guild Merchant, with the Hanaper and with the other liberties and free customs to that Guild belonging, and that they may have all other liberties and free customs and quittances as is aforesaid. Witnesses hereto, Richard Earl of Cornwall, our brother, Roger le Pygot Earl of Norfolk, Peter de Saband, William de Ferrers, Ralph Fit Nichol, William de Cantilupo, John de Plesset, Paul Peyner, Robert de Mustengros, Bartholomey Peche, and others. Given by our hand at Woodstock the 26th day of August, in the 30th year of our reign. And we holding the grant, confirmation, and prohibition aforesaid ratified and in good part do grant and confirm for us and our heirs as much as in us is unto our beloved clerk, Robert de Clyderhou, now the parson of the church aforesaid, and his successors, parsons of the same church, and the burgesses of the borough aforesaid, like as the charter aforesaid reasonably testifies; and as the aforesaid Robert and his predecessors, parsons of the church aforesaid, and the burgessors aforesaid and their ancestors, have hitherto reasonably used and enjoyed the liberties aforesaid, from the time of making the charter aforesaid. Witnesses, Gilbert de Clare Earl of Gloucester and Hereford, Humphrey de Bohun Earl of Hereford and Essex, Adamaro de Valentia Earl of Pembroke, Hugh le Despencer, Edmund de Malo Lacu, steward of our household, and others. Given by our hand at the New Monastery the 7th day of June, in the 7th year of our reign.—GULLING."

John Gerard received Ince as the dowry of his wife, Ellen, daughter of Richard de Ynce, in 1399. Eight of the family were colonels in the royal army during the Great Rebellion. Ann, daughter and heiress of Thomas Gerard, who died in 1673, married John Gerard, son of Sir William Gerard, the third baronet, but died without issue. The manor of Ince was obtained by purchase by Colonel Richard Gerard, son of the second baronet. It was again sold by William Gerard, Esq., to Alexander,

sixth Earl of Balcarres, but the hall passed in marriage with Mary, sister and co-heiress of William Gerrard, to John Walmesley, Esq.

Abram, originally Adburgham, was held by Richard de Adburgham, by gift of Henry II., in fee farm, and Isabella, daughter and co-heiress of John Abram, of Abram.

CHAPTER VI.

Origin of Penance in England—The Bradshaighs—Mab's Cross—Wigan and Blackrod Chuntries—The Bradshaigh Tomb in the Parish Church.

WHEN the Mohammedans laid forcible claim to Palestine a mad enthusiasm took possession of all Christians. The extraordinary efforts of one able statesman have been known to gain an unexpected victory for his party, but the efforts of Peter the Hermit at the end of the eleventh century diverted the actions of nations and millions of individuals from their old habits to new and sympathetic channels. The wonderful powers of Christianity had just spread their influence over Europe, which in its religious infancy had magnified the Christian marvels, and looked for miracles to be done for and by its own believing members. If Christianity had done so much for men as people were told it had done, then it was clearly the duty, they reasoned, of every man to do something for Christianity according to the ever-believed political-economy principle of service for service. The passion for doing something grew in all, and every man waxed so enthusiastic that he determined to take the kingdom of heaven by the force of his own sacrificial zeal. It was the great papal doctrine of paying, or working off, the debt of sin. To die in defence of the Cross was supposed to be, martyr-like, the greatest proof of honest belief in Christianity, so, in the hope of gaining eternal life, millions hurried to the Holy Land to die, whilst millions more talked of their bravery and the goodness of the cause, for, what myriads believed to be, said the ignorant and superstitious, must be, a divine mission. Many returned from this promised land of fabulous glory, romantic life, and martyrs' graves, with relics which were first considered sacred because of their associations, and then were worshipped because of the increased influences of superstition. The ordinary hardships of the journey and death on the battle-field were not always considered sufficient proofs of the sincerity of the believing soldiers, for many, troubled mayhap by the gnawings of a vexing conscience, wilfully added torments to their troubles as penance for sin. The fighting Christians of this early salvation army were model examples of faith and work combined, and, as they endured so much, others who lived quietly at home considered it their duty to prove their piety by self-inflicted

penance. By this course of reasoning it soon became fashionable to afflict the mind and torment the body. At the end of the twelfth century we find royalty itself, to the admiration of the whole nation and to the satisfaction of heaven as all believed, doing penance at the tomb of Thomas à Becket. Penance was considered a proof of humiliation and contrition which deserved absolution from sin, and thus it came to be believed as the only genuine proof of piety. In Wigan, too, there were guilty sinners and penitential saints. Once every week a noble lady, in scant penitential garb and naked feet, wandered from Haigh to a cross at the outskirts of Wigan. Though accustomed to all the luxuries the times afforded, she wandered alone, in the early morning, through the lonely woods of Haigh in frost and snow, fair weather and foul, waded through the river Douglas, and, wearied, fatigued, and well known, pursued her way along the public road, did penance at the cross before the almost worshipping burghers' children, and then returned as she came. She had committed a woful sin! She had been the happy wife of Sir William Bradshaigh, of Haigh and Blackrod, and was the mother of his children. Ten years before, he had gone off to the Scottish wars. Tardy news of his welfare and hardships came occasionally from him with expressions of tender love, but after a long interval of ten years came the intelligence that Sir William had died a soldier's death, and she mourned over the lost one whose grave even she could not visit. The estates, which she held in her own right, were valuable, and her children were unprotected. She was envied for the former by money-hunters, and the latter became the wards of the Earl of Lancaster, who was under great obligations to Sir Osmond Neville, who had fallen in love with the estates and sought the hand of the widow. She believed herself to be entirely at their mercy, and for the protection of her children she married the Welshman against her will; but the marriage was illegal (and thus she did penance), for Sir William was not dead, but had been taken prisoner, and, after his liberty, returned to save his wife from the oppression of the overbearing knight whom he slew.

An unprotected rich widow had by no means cause to consider herself secure. There were many greedy, lawless ruffians, ready to pounce upon such prey. In 1437 the rich widow of Lord Butler, of Bewsey, Warrington, was forcibly carried away from her own house to the wilds of Wales by William Pulle, of Liverpool, and brother of Sir John Pulle. She was most brutally treated and outraged, and petitions to the King and Commons for redress were alike in vain. Another tragedy in this family is recorded in a MS. now in the Bodleian Library. This story cannot be reconciled with known fact, and is, therefore, discredited, for it is either misunderstood or untrue. This tragedy of 1463 is thus briefly recorded:—"Sir John Butler, knight, was slain in his bed by the procurement of the Lord Stanley, Sir Piers Leigh, and

Master William Savage, joining with him in that action (corrupting his servants), his porter setting a light in a window to give light upon the water that was about his house at Bewsey. . . . They came over the moat in leather boats, and so to his chamber, where one of his servants, named Holdcroft, was slain, being his chamberlain. The other (the porter) basely betrayed his master; they payed him a great reward, and so coming away with him, they hanged him (the porter) on a tree in Bewsey Park."

The interesting little history of Mabel is preserved in a few lines in the Bradshaigh family pedigree, a quaint copy of which may be seen in the introduction of Sir Walter Scott's "Betrothed." This family history says:—"Sir William Bradshaigh, second son of Sir John, was a great traveller and a soldier, and married to Mabel, daughter and sole heiress of Hugh Norris de Haghe and Blackrode, and had issue, in 8 Edward II. Of this Mabel is a story by tradition of undoubted verity, that in Sir William Bradshaigh's absence (being ten years away in the Holy Wars) she married a Welsh knight. Sir William, returning from the wars, came in a palmer's habit amongst the poor to Haghe, who, when she saw him, and conjecturing that he 'favoured' her former husband, wept, for which the knight chastised her, at which Sir William went and made himself known to his tenants; in which space the knight fled, but near to Newton Parke Sir William overtook him and slew him. The said Dame Mabell was enjoined by her confessor to doe penance by going onest every week barefoot and bare legged to a crosse near Wigan from the Haghe wilest she lived, and is called Mab ✚ to this day; and their monument lyes in Wigan Church as you see them portrayed."

When or by whom this Mab's Cross was erected no record tells. Although it came to receive the name of Mab's Cross, it certainly stood where it now stands before Mab's time. In sorrow for her gentle sin and joy for her lord's return, she, to the very letter of the priest's humiliating mandate, did penance and was happy. Penance was not sufficient to appease the wrath of offended virtue and heaven. She was a devotee to the religious faith of her time, and paid willingly and liberally for the prayers of the priests to absolve her soul. She was able to pay, for, independent of her husband's fortunes, she herself was the heiress of the estates of Blackrod and Haigh. But, whilst she was enduring her weekly penitential suffering, Sir William was an enforced exile unable either to console or condole. He was condemned as a felon in 1309 (Inquisitiones ad quod damnum) for slaying the Welsh knight. After his compulsory exile of one year was over he returned, and both were happy, although the work of penitence still went on.

The venerable house of Haigh is closely connected with the history of Wigan, and is geographically so situated on the rising ground in the east of the town, as if meant to oversee all its acts and take a guardian interest in burghal progress. Whilst

the hall is itself sheltered from the bitter east winds, it commands a pleasant view of the undulating western plain in which the old borough is situated. It is said that in very clear weather the Isle of Man can be seen from it. On the same site was the home of the Bradshaighs, and within two miles of it the abode of the Norrys, the last of whose direct race was Mabella. The honourable family now inhabiting it have been ornaments to their town and country. They have been distinguished in war, politics, religion, literature, and science. Thence have come many of the most distinguished mayors and parliamentary representatives of the borough. No member ever represented it so long, or more faithfully, than Sir Roger Bradshaigh, who was also mayor of the town for eight different years. A member of another branch of the same family had the distinguished, but questionable, honour of being Judge in the trial of Charles I. This office of Chief Justice has been filled, according to the history of our land, by illustrious and notorious men. Clergymen, soldiers, and civilians have desecrated or adorned it; barbarous judgments, from that high office, have been given and approved of in half-civilised times, and bribes have been accepted by the chief representative of justice, such as even savages would condemn. In that very office filthy lucre has blinded justice, and made clear the way to lawlessness. Severity has marked some Chief Justices, and wisdom others. One was proved to have been a highwayman, when Prince Hal himself thought it not an ignoble act, and one of the greatest Judges of England was the disgrace of justice, and suffered imprisonment for his bribery. This office which Bradshaw held was of Norman institution.

It was the highest office in the kingdom, ranking even above all titles of nobility. Odo, the half-brother of the Conqueror by a Norman tanner's daughter, was the first Chief Justice of England. The Court of the King's Bench, over which the Chief Justice presides, has always been and is still supposed to be held wherever the sovereign is in England. The first who sat in Westminster Hall was the notoriously atrocious Flambard, in the reign of Rufus. The first Chief Justice of England who acted merely as a judge was Lord Chief Justice Bruce, grandfather of the great Robert Bruce, King of Scotland. He was appointed to the office, after an honourable career, on the 8th of March, 1268, in the fifty-second year of the reign of Henry III.

The Hall of the Norrys, within four miles of Wigan, with the houses of the retainers, was anciently the nucleus of a small, but, according to the beliefs of many, an important, town called Blackrod. The origin of this family or of the name, Norris, Norrys, Norreis, Norres, Norensis, or Noricus cannot be traced. The barons hostile to King John were all denominated "Norensis," or North Countrymen; but whether this is the origin of the name cannot be positively affirmed. The first authenticated member of the local family is Hugh le Norris, or Hugh de Blackerode. On the 10th

October, 1199, King John confirmed to Hugh le Norris a caracute in Blackrod. In 1202 Hugh le Norris owed the Treasury one mark as part of the charge made for the confirming of his charter. His grandsons were William and Hugh, the latter of whom was the father of Mabella, the wife of William de Bradshaigh. The constables of this township in 1682 presented a favourable account of their district. They said: "We have no murders, felonies, or like misdemeanors committed within our liberties to present to the best of our knowledge: we have permitted no vagabonds or suspected persons to pass through our town that we know of. Winchester watch has been daily observed. We have no common drunkards, swearers, or cursers to present."—(Blackrod Vestry Accounts).

Dame Mabella, the year before she founded a chantry in Blackrod, founded and endowed one in the Parish Church of Wigan, dedicating it to St. Mary the Virgin. The endowment at first was a messuage in Wigan, supposed to be the present Mesnes, in the tenure of Henry Banastre, and with certain premises in Haigh, where she was lady of the manor. This chantry was founded with the assent of Roger, Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, the Earl of Lancaster, and the Rector, De Langeton. The attesting witnesses to the deed were Thomas de Lathom, Robert de Langeton, Rich. de Hoghton, Wil. de Lee, the parsons of Wigan and Standish, and others. She was famed for her wealth, misfortunes, and piety. The incumbent priest who first derived the benefits of this endowment was John de Langeton, the rector, but on the 2nd September, 1338, John de Sutton, presbyter was instituted as priest to the chantry of the altar of St. Mary by the Bishop of Lichfield; and more than 200 years after, in 1553, when the population of Wigan had risen to 2600 "houselyne people," for this part of his duties the incumbent, Hugh Cokeson, at the age of 51 years, was receiving a pension of £3 0s. 3d.—(Willis's Hist. Mitr., Abb., p. 109).

The lady Mabella survived her husband, Sir William Bradshaigh, and founded a chantry in the Chapel of Blackrod in 1338, which she dedicated to St. Katherine the Virgin, giving as an endowment "two messuages, sixty acres of land, eight acres of meadow, ten acres of wood, with their appurtenances, in Blackrode, with turbary of the said messuages, to have and to hold to the chantry-priest and his successors for ever, saying divine service daily in the said Chapel of Blackrode for ever," making special mention of the name of Mabella in mass celebrations.—(Lancashire Chantries, part I., p. 125. Chet. pub. Reg. Northburgh, Lichf., p. 58).

When Mabella died, and was laid with the remains of her husband in the chantry built by her at Wigan, the most magnificent fine-art monument in the neighbourhood was erected to their memory by money left for the purpose. It was an altar-tomb, with the effigies of Sir William and Mabella lying alongside on the top. His effigy is in chain-mail, cross-legged, with his sword partially drawn from the scabbard on his

left side, with a shield charged with two bends, the Bradshaigh arms; hers is in a long robe, veiled, her hands elevated and joined over her breast in an attitude of prayer. At the recent restoration of the church (1847) under the Bradshaigh Chapel stairs, lay the two figures, then commonly known as Adam and Eve, where they had been removed out of the way. Their exact original position was unknown. The figures were removed and the tomb restored, after the designs of Mr. John Gibbs, Architectural Sculptor. The present figure of Lady Mabel is the original one, but that of Sir William is new, although an exact copy of the old one which lies in a very dilapidated state in the centre of the present erection. In the vault were found skeletons, supposed to be those of Sir William and Mabel. They were put into new coffins and deposited in a new vault.

There are instances in history showing that some men, and learned men, too, have tried all sorts of religion with the general result of either coming back to the beliefs of childhood or ending in infidelity. More generally still is it, however, that men in the prime of life and vigour of health have been the servants of mammon, and when their shattered bodies were no longer capable of enjoying the pleasures of life they have devoted the remainder of their days to righteous services, whilst many have led wicked lives and left their possessions to build and endow sacred places, where their souls might be prayed for for ever. This was the origin of many of our Church foundations, and especially of chantries. The Papal faith, with its dogma of absolution by payment, fostered this idea. Many a fat living has been left to pay for poor prayers for the dead. Provision for the poor and prayers for the dead have been left by many a hypocrite, although many in all honesty of heart and purpose have founded churches, thinking thereby to do God service. Sir Gilbert Haydock of Haydock petitioned the Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry to be allowed to build a chantry in the church of Winwick, which was allowed. His descendant, Peter Legh, of Lyne and Haydock, presented a priest to that chantry in 1542. The Legh Chapel is on the south side of the nave, and contains a monumental sepulchre of brass, on which are placed the effigies of Sir Peter Legh and his wife. On the north side of the nave is the chapel of the Gerards of Bryn, on the oak gate of which is a rude carving of the initials of Sir Thomas Gerard and his wife, executed in 1471. In the year 1650 the Commissioners reported that at Haydock there was a parsonage house, glebe, and housing of the yearly value of £161; three water corn-mills, worth £30 a year; the rents of some tenements, worth £28 a year; and the tithes of corn and small tithes, worth £445 2s. 0d. a year. Of the then incumbent, Mr. Charles Herle, they found him to be "an orthodox, Godly-preaching minister," but that he did not observe Thursday, the 13th day of June inst. as a day of humiliation.—(Parl. Inq., Lanch. MSS., vol. II.)

The following documents about the foundation of a Standish Chantry, written in 1328, and recently published by the Cheetham Society, are given as interesting specimens of a general medieval religious rule :—

“To all the sons of Holy Mother Church, to whom the present tripartite charter shall come. Henry, son of John le Waleys, chaplain, sends greeting in the Lord, because in the future praise and glorious reward is to the souls of those who while they live serve the Lord with all their strength charitably and devoutly, to the praise and honour of our Redeemer and the most Blessed Virgin His Mother. Know that I have ordained and constituted in the Church of Standish a certain free chantry for ever, in the manner following, namely: That a certain chaplain may be resident there for ever (*et perpetuus*), who at the altar of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Parish Church of St. Wilfred of Standish, shall celebrate divine offices daily for the soul of the same Henry, and for the souls of his father and mother and his ancestors and all the faithful deceased. So that at the death of one chaplain another should be appointed to perform these offices, and so successively at what time soever or as often as any deputed chaplain of the said chantry shall die or from any other cause the same chantry shall become vacant. I also will and concede that any fit and honest chaplain is to be elected in regard of charity by me while I live, or by other feoffees of the same chantry after my decease, and without receiving anything from the same chaplain to the said chantry, doing it as is aforesaid assigned, graciously and felicitously. And to the use and sustentation of the same chaplains and their successors I concede, give, assign, and constitute two messuages and 60 acres of land, with their appurtenances, in Standish and Longetre, to have and to hold to the same chaplains so there celebrating, and their successors in fee and perpetual alms quietly and free from all secular service for ever. And I the same Henry and my heirs will warrant, acquit, and defend the aforesaid chaplains and their successors doing their service (congrue) for the said chantry, against all men. Of the lands and tenements of this chantry, pertaining to the same chantry, I ordain, make, and constitute these feoffees after my death, namely, Richard le Waleys and his heirs, nevertheless subject to such condition that if in the collation of the same chantry with the said lands and tenements they shall be remiss or negligent for one month from the time of vacancy of the same, I will and concede that John de Standish, patron of the same church, and his heirs, shall collate to the same chantry that time. And if the said John and his heirs shall make default in the aforesaid collation for 15 days following, I am willing that the Prior of Burscogh who shall then be shall collate that time to the said chantry, but saving otherwise to my heirs their collation to the said chantry when it should become vacant. And that this, my donation, may be firm and stable to these presents tripartite, I have appended my seal. These being witnesses—Sir William de Bradshaigh, William de Worthington, John de Cophull, William de Anderton, William de Burgh, John de Chissenhall, Thomas de Adelington, and others.”

“Edward, by the grace of God, King of England, Lord of Ireland, and Duke of Aquitaine. To all to whom the present letters shall come greeting. Although by the common counsel of our kingdom it is ordained that it is not lawful for religious men or others to enter upon any fee so that it may not come to Mortmain without our licence and that of the chief lords, of whom that fee is immediately held; yet we have granted and given licence by a fine, which Henry, son of John le Waleys, chaplain, made to us and our heirs, as much as in us lies, to the same Henry, that he may give and assign two messuages and 60 acres of land, with appurtenances, in Standish and Longetre, to a certain chaplain, that he may celebrate each day divine offices for the soul of the said Henry and the souls of his father and mother and his ancestors, and all the faithful deceased, at the altar of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Church of St. Wilfrid, of Standish, for ever. And that the same chaplain may be able to receive and hold the said messuage and land from the said Henry to him and his successors for ever. And that neither the said Henry nor his heirs, nor the said chaplain or his

successors, by reason of the said statute, be not proceeded against in any way, or be troubled by us or our heirs. Saving to the chief Lords of the fee the usual and accustomed service. Dated at York 12th February, 2nd year of his reign (Ed. III.)"

"To all the sons of Holy Mother Church to whom this present charter indented shall come. Henry, son of John de Waleyes, chaplain, sends greeting in the Lord, because in the future praise and glorious reward is to the souls of those who, while they live, serve the Lord with all their strength, charitably and devoutly, to the praise and honour of our Redeemer and the most Blessed Virgin, his Mother. Know that I have ordained and constituted in the afore-named Church of Standish. (Here he recites his first charter.) These being witnesses—William de Worthington, Thomas de Longetre, William de Anderton, William de Burgh, John de Chissenhall, Roger de Chissenhall, Henry de Ines, and others. Dated at Standish the Thursday on the Feast St. Gregory, Pope, 1337."

CHAPTER VII.

Edward II. and his People—Civil War—Inquisitions held at Wigan in 1323—Local Characters implicated in Rebellion—Clyderhou a Rebel by Proxy: His Trial and Result—Cucking Stool—Stratagem of the King for Levying Taxes—Coal—Death of De Clyderhou: His Tomb in Sawley.

LIKE most of the old kings of England, the indolent and fickle Edward II. was frequently hard pressed for money. Scarcely had the Scottish war finished when his own wife, his barons and their followers, rose up against him and finally dethroned him. He canvassed the whole country, the Mayor of Wigan amongst others, for money on security of his personal estates, to enable him to carry on war, for he could not constitutionally levy any tax. When his finances were low he had no conscientious scruples about making liberal promises, although there was no prospect of his ever being able to keep his part of the bargain. England would never have had such a grand Constitution as it has but for the monetary embarrassments of her kings. Many of her revolutions were but determined threats not to support the sovereign in his tyranny, or illegality, resulting in stopping his supplies, and so crippling his powers. Thus, the combined action of the people was stronger than any regal power. Englishmen, as a body, in no age have wished to be without a king, but have, nevertheless, been strongly determined to have liberty and fair play. The actions of the feeble and headstrong Edward were too arbitrary for barons and people. At his coronation he solemnly vowed to keep and preserve the laws and customs of the land, but at his convenience he recklessly disregarded his promises, governed unconstitutionally, and drove the people to rebellion. Many noble knights, yeomen, clergy, and people in the neighbourhood of Wigan joined the rebels. Again, as if it were the fate of our struggling young Constitution, the furies of civil war rampantly ravaged the land; ties of blood were disregarded, and unhappy England weltered in the blood of civil strife, under the Duke of Lancaster, against the king. There was the usual result of alternate victory and defeat. Ambitious hopes and cankering despair were the simultaneous possessors of every breast, and the poor in all cases suffered for the insatiable, ambitious jealousy of the great. Vast estates

were risked in the awful game of change and chance, as in the case of reckless gamblers trusting to the very last throw of the dice, while the hard-fighting, guileless poor staked their ordinary poverty against the chances of famine or death, and yet all fought for liberty. Liberty, often falsely so called, has been the standard hoisted on many a sanguinary field. In this rebellion there were the usual glorious victories, thousands slain, and tens of thousands rendered homeless. The king won, Lancaster lost, and yet, after all, the then victorious king was deposed, and murdered within four years.

The barons were at first the terror of all beneath them, for each one was a prince in his province; but they had fought bravely, distinguished themselves in every battle, and won glory for the country, and so, with genuine English spirit, the people not only forgave them for former wrongs, but looked up to them as their champions. Moreover, they had risked their lives and properties against the kings themselves in matters of freedom which concerned all. When the people had complained of injustice on the king's part, the barons had never been slow to take up their cause. It was the barons who had gained for them the Magna Charta, and the barons who had gained for them a representative government; moreover, barons and people were invariably found to make common cause of their grievances. In this reign the nobles were specially insulted and degraded by a weak king and his favourites. The barons rebelled against the injustice of the former and the insolence of the latter, and the lower orders were willing to take up arms in their cause. The most powerful baron of the age was the Earl of Lancaster, who raised an army to compel the king to banish his favourites. Many men from Wigan joined this army. Laity and clergy alike expressed their disapprobation of the king's conduct by helping the barons. There was scarcely a nobleman in the neighbourhood of Wigan who did not join the Earl of Lancaster with his followers. Bradshaigh of Haigh was at the head of a party of rebels. The Hollands of Holland led their disorderly bodies against the king. Longford and Pontefract committed all sorts of depredations against the Royalists. The rector of Wigan, Robert de Clyderhou, was not a soldier himself, but he instigated the people against the king, and promised them absolution if they fell in battle. He sent his son to join Lancaster, and paid for the outfit and maintenance of others. After the glorious victory came the usual inquisitions, hangings, drawings, and quarterings, in which Wigan was not without its episode. In the seventeenth year of Edward II. (1323) an inquisition was held at Wigan in the presence and at the command of his Royal Highness. The whole neighbourhood was full of gossip about the critical crisis. The accused were local potentates, and all felt it a duty to be interested; but few hoped for mercy, as they were no strangers to such inquisitions and their judgments. In the opinion of the common people, and they had cause for such

judgment, to be accused was to be well-nigh condemned. In their experience few were placed for trial at the bar of justice and discharged as not guilty. The popular wonder was not whether they should be found guilty, but whether they should be put to death. Though all knew they were guilty, each still speculated on the chances of escape through the likelihood of evidence being suppressed or witnesses being suborned. The arguments for and against each individual were familiar to every inhabitant, but the wisdom of the law was the bugbear of their hopes. Every great crime, or treason, naturally caused a sensation throughout the country; but when the nobility, or local gods, were summoned to the bar of justice, excitement and wonderment to an extraordinary degree prevailed. The ordinary presence of the judges gave rise to much speculation and awe, but now a royal commission was specially convened to enquire into the conduct of local gentlemen of eminence and leaders of the town's party, whose whole deeds were popularly known to be treasonable, and consequently all were deeply interested in the proceedings. The parish parson, Clyderhou, Bradshaigh, the head of the house of Haigh, the three brothers Holland, and others were now prisoners at the bar. They were each known to and revered by every child in the parish, and every gossip in the place knew they were liable, and likely, to lose their heads. Even those of them who were not popular were pitied, for civilised humanity commiserates the misfortunes of even its enemies. In every ale-house and at every fireside the approaching trial was the topic of conversation. Everybody knew they were guilty, but such are the loopholes of law and the hopes of merciful men that few dared to utter openly the verdict on which they had been secretly compelled to decide in their minds. The day came, the royal judges arrived, and the accused were brought up for trial in the public court-house or primitive Moot Hall at the Rector's Manor. The inhabitants were eager, yet afraid, to hear the judgment. It was no surprise to hear the sentence was severe, and yet there was a feeling of relief on hearing of the almost unexpected leniency, for the heaviest fine is more lenient than death.

Nicholas de Longford, of the county of Lancaster, was fined 200 marks (£133 6s. 8d.) Ricardus de Pontefract, Robertus de Holland, Johannes de Holland, and Ricardus de Holland found security to keep the peace; that is, they were found guilty, but told not to do it again—a narrow and happy escape for these local rebels. But these were not the only men who were wanted. The head of the house of Haigh, son of the penitential Mabel, had led a disorderly body—no doubt from Wigan and its neighbourhood—into the field against the king. A special warrant for his apprehension or head was issued under the royal seal, but he was nowhere to be found; and soon the fiery wrath of the king, who gave special powers to Johannes de Weston, marshal of the household, to pursue, arrest, and to take both him and Ricardus de Holland, cooled and was appeased, for he had so many enemies

and difficulties to contend against that he found it a more profitable policy to be reconciled to the repentant than to hang them; and so we find that the very next year Bradshaigh had not only been forgiven, but trusted and honoured, for he was appointed the head of a force sent to protect the Lancashire people against Scotch invaders. Clyderhou also was tried at this Wigan assize. He was accused of inciting others to rebel, and of having provided an outfit for a man-at-arms and four soldiers. Whether more obeyed his call history does not relate, but of the cases mentioned he was found guilty, fined £200, and imprisoned in Nottingham, but ransomed for 300 marks (£200).—(Rot. Plac. Coram. R. Mich., 17th Edward III., p. 2, m. 19). He put in such a reasonable defence that he was not deprived of further rights. According to the law he had but done his duty, and in his prayers before his parishioners he had prayed for the king and kingdom. He was assessed for lands in Lancashire held under the Earl of Lancaster, and, according to the charter by which he and his predecessors had held their estates, he had agreed to find a man, mounted and armed, for the service of Lancaster whenever he went to war; and it was no business of his whether the war was for or against the king. He had but kept his feudal promise, like other landed proprietors of his neighbourhood. However, he had been fined, and there was no remedy, for, however much money the law may devour, it disgorges little.

This rector did not by any means have his own way always in his parish, for we find him at war with his burgesses for depriving him of his rights, against which he petitioned. He complained that the burgesses had violated the charter by taking toll and assize of bread and beer, but the only answer he obtained was that he had the right to sue them at common law, and there the dispute ignobly rested.

The old Saxon judgments by ordeal had long become obsolete, and trial by jury been substituted, as well as wiser methods of punishment adopted. The rector was the local judge for ordinary offences, and he had a prison at the Manor House in which judgments were executed or prisoners retained until the time for the Lancaster Assize, to which all felons had to be committed. Public punishments were very common, some of which, such as the cucking stool, pillory, and stocks, were not abolished until this present century. The stocks were for drunk and disorderly persons generally, the pillory for thieves, the cucking stool for debtors, cowards, sluggards, debauchees, prostitutes, and gossips. Burgesses could not be ducked on the cuck-stool for debt until the fourth time on which they were found defaulters. It has been called by some the ducking, or choking, stool. It was a long see-saw beam, with a chair fixed on one end, which hung over the river or pond, or sometimes a dirty mud hole. The culprit was tied to the chair or stool, whilst raised out of danger or on a

high and dry place for the convenience of those carrying out the popular law, and then lowered into the water again and again. Hundreds of people would turn out to see a notorious person ducked and rejoice at his or her discomfiture. The *London Evening Post* of April 27-30, 1745, says :—"Last week a woman that keeps the Queen's Head ale-house, at Kingston, in Surrey, was ordered by the Court to be ducked for scolding, and was accordingly placed in the chair and ducked in the River Thames, under Kingston Bridge, in the presence of 2,000 or 3,000 people." The price of making one of these limbs of the law in 1572 was twenty-two shillings and fourpence. A man who called a woman a bad name was, after she had cleared herself on oath, "to take himself by the nose and say he had spoken a lie," and this he had to do in public.

This grotesque custom was a favourite with old authors. Antiquaries and historians have written pleasant chapters on it, and poetasters have adorned the memory of the cucking-stool with verse, in which the hilarity of the assembled crowds, and the *burlesque* baptism of the unhappy culprit, have been described in glowing language. The following is a specimen of a confused and confusing effusion :—

"Down in the deep the stool descends,
But here at first we miss our ends.
She mounts again, and rages more
Than ever vixen did before ;
So throwing water in the fire
Will make it burn up but the higher.
If so, my friends, pray let her take
A second turn into the lake ;
And rather than your patient lose,
Thrice and again repeat the dose.
No brawling wives, no furious wenches,
No fire so hot but water quenches."—WEST.

Although many people may well remember the stocks being publicly used in Wigan, and that by order of the magistrates, it must not be forgotten that such a mode of punishment was one of the earliest ordeals of English civilisation. It came into existence in the infancy of the country, and gradually became obsolete with the country's maturity. At the open space beside the south entrance to the Wigan Church was the public pump-well for supplying the inhabitants with water, and of which detailed notice shall be hereafter taken. Close by this well were the stocks, in the very thoroughfare of all religious people, who, no doubt, in passing the woe-begone culprits, earnestly breathed that ancient prayer, "I thank God I am not as this publican."

It was at this period, and for long after, considered right to punish the offending member of the body, or satiate the guilty man with an overdose of what he was very fond. As the drunkard showed special partiality for the contents of a barrel,

it was thought that no better, or more appropriate, punishment could be devised than that of placing the toper in a barrel, and thus expose him to public view and scorn. After lying in prison all night the sobered drunkard, longing in vain for a hair of the dog that bit him, was brought before the magistrates, found guilty, and ordered to parade the streets in the drunkard's cloak, which was a barrel turned upside down, with a hole, from which his bare head and woe-begone face protruded, whilst from a hole, at fitting places, in either side, his trembling hands hung out. The cloak reached to the knees of an average-sized man. The break or bridle for scolding women was a great degradation to the guilty and a source of much amusement to the hilarious crowds. It was a sugar-loaf cap of iron hooping, with a flat piece projecting into the mouth, to keep the unruly member still. The whole was firmly padlocked, and the culprit led by two strings—the reins of the bridle—all over the town.

There was neither a Southport nor Blackpool in those days, nor any necessity for them. Seaside resorts for the populace are necessities of the nineteenth century. Flirtation visits there to resuscitate the jaded mind from commercial despondency were undreamt of. Cooing and billing in Winter Gardens whilst under the impression of lingering lovingly in Paradise were stretches of the imagination far beyond the reach of Lancashire witches of the middle ages. More homely and serious, though less expensive, methods of convalescence and courtship were adopted. Then it was the acknowledged fate of mankind that each should win his bread by the sweat of his brow. That this life was merely a state of probation for a future existence was the belief of the multitude. To hoard up wealth and accumulate vast fortunes had not yet become a Lancashire fashion, and, consequently, there was not that perennial, present-day, high-strained, excitement and competition in the commercial and professional world requiring that entire change of scenery and circumstance now an annual and absolute necessity for repairing the wear and tear of body brought on by mental worry. Week in and week out, each laboured and existed. There was no national system of education, nor over-thronged competitive world in which each was trained, by the force of surrounding circumstances, to excel in craft or deceit, or to debilitate the mind with scientific or speculative, but impracticable, ideas. All were workers, unworried by ideas that are begotten by a superficial education. Holidays were unneeded and unknown. Manual labour wearied the body, but never worried the mind, and the fatigued body provided its own antidote by inviting refreshing and dreamless sleep. These were days of physical toil, when even the half-holiday on Saturday afternoon was not requested. Yet, although the labours of husbandmen and craftsmen were very hard, they were by no means so overpowering as to prevent any class from joining in the popular sports during the summer evenings and on

Sundays, for these were rather hailed by all as envied relaxations, even when they entailed much exertion, as they were such as elevated the spirits and brought other muscles into play. Pleasure was doubly enjoyable because of the limitations to its amount. These were not the days of wealth, when rich men boasted they were gentlemen who did not work for a living—a most useless, despicable, and imbecile class of mortals who can only foster degeneracy of race and national retrogression.

The games of the period are thus poetically summarised by an old versifier:—

“ Any they dare challenge for to throw the sledge,
 To jump or leap over ditch or hedge ;
 To wrestle, play at stool-ball, or to run,
 To pitch the bar, or to shoot off a gun ;
 To play at loggats, nine holes, or ten pins,
 To try it out at foot-ball, by the shins ;
 At tick-tack, seize noddie, maw and ruff,
 At hot cockles, leap frog, or blind man's buff ;
 To drink the halper-pots, or deal at the whole can,
 To play at chess, or pue, and inkhorn ;
 To dance the morris, play at barley brake,
 At all exploits a man can think or speak ;
 At shove-groat, venter point, or crop and pile,
 At beshrew him that's last at any stile ;
 At leaping over a Christmas bonfire,
 Or at the drawing dame out of the mire ;
 At shoot cock, Gregory, stool-ball, and what not,
 Pick-point, top and scourge, to make him hot.”

The barons continued to acquire great power both over the king and the people. They had had many grievances, and bravely opposed the king, whilst wisely persuading the people that they were fighting their battles. It required great political skill to extricate the king from the dilemma into which he was certainly being placed. It would have been unwise in him to oppose the combination of barons and people, for together they had him completely under their control. They could stop supplies, and thereby destroy his power. He had failed to secure the confidence of the nobles, and the wisest policy left, if not the only one, was to seek the loyalty and favour of the guilds of different towns, the members of which had now grown to be an influential middle class. Their united loyalty was stronger than the power of the barons. To make them the real arbiters of the country's weal or woe would show a confidence in them that would make them proud of their importance, and by legislating according to their own rules they would take pleasure in advancing the laws and supporting the King and Constitution, of which they themselves formed the most important part.

Royalty was advised that these guilds had maintained their civic rights to the good of the country, and the likelihood was they would not work to the detriment of

the government, but be distinguished and conscientious supporters of it. To carry on the government and the numerous national wars money was wanted, and it seemed a hardship for those burgesses to be called upon to pay heavy taxes without their having any power to say yea or nay. The king wisely resolved to give them a voice in the matter, hoping that the Commons, through their representatives, would willingly submit to any tax imposed by their fellow-townsmen. The policy was a great success. Boroughs sent their representatives, and steps were taken to grant charters to other influential and prosperous towns whose representatives might make the laws and tax their townsmen. The members, as expected, were pleased at the confidence placed in them, and passed laws of supply, enabling the king to levy taxes on their constituents who could not reasonably refuse to submit to the laws of their representatives, which they practically were.

The science of geology was not dreamt of. People, generally, never for a moment considered that the earth was otherwise than it was then. That the world was made in one day of 24 hours was an axiom which they could no more think of doubting than they could that two and two make four, whether added or multiplied. People of Wigan never dreamt of mines of wealth and resources of domestic comfort lying close beneath them. They were ignorant of the carboniferous strata that were to make their county one of the richest and most thickly populated in the country. The burgesses were allowed to gather sticks for fuel from the forests of the rector; then peat was discovered to be an excellent and more easily conveyed substitute, and, finally, cannel coal, at the beginning of the 14th century, was discovered in some neighbouring *fault*, and found to give both great heat and excellent light. When the *fault* portion of the stratum was used up, the properties of coal appreciated, and its value as a mercantile commodity fully perceived, speculating capitalists were found bold enough to dig for the combustible rock, and, finding the work profitable, founded and fostered a new trade, which has long since become the staple business of the town. Smiths, wrights, millers, merchants, weavers, tanners, bleachers, masons, and colliers were now the common tradesmen of the town.

Wigan owes its present prosperity to the rich coalfields that lie, stratum upon stratum, beneath it. During the middle ages its progress was quite equal to that of any other town, but even that was of the most conservative nature. It was famed for its manufacture of coverlets, rugs, blankets, bed-ticks, linen, checks, calicoes, fustians, braziery, pewtery, and its brass and iron foundries, in which labours it employed a very large number of workmen. These trades had their day in the borough, and died out; but, with the invention of steam, came the tide of greatness which, had it been taken at its flood, would have made it the most prosperous and richest town in Lancashire. Its proximity to Liverpool, its Act of Parliament to make

the Douglas navigable, its unlimited possession of coal—the primary necessity for steam power—gave it extraordinary advantages over Manchester and every other town in the county. But it is easier to lament than to recall and amend the past. The day of golden opportunities went by, and other towns sprang up and superseded the loyal borough in commerce which nature might well be said to have designed for Wigan alone. Its general prosperity has literally been forced upon it, as the inevitable share of that which has been national; and it can only look back, like thousands of able men, on the great and golden opportunities irrevocably lost, or, like a degraded aristocrat, boast of its antiquity and the greatness which it *might* have acquired. Like a foolish speculator, it allowed its talents to lie hidden in the earth, instead of trading with them to the best advantage that posterity might acquire its own with usury; yet, notwithstanding this, it has remained in affluent circumstances because of its natural entailed legacies.

Robert de Clyderhou had been presented to All Saints' Parish by Sir John de Langeton, patron of the church, and instituted by the Bishop of Lichfield on the 22nd September, 1303, where he remained parson for upwards of 30 years, being succeeded at his death, in 1334, by Robert, son of John de Langeton. He was buried in the family vault in the most northerly side chapel of the north transept of Sawley Abbey, where he had been rector for one year, 13 years after his appointment to Wigan. On his tombstone is carved the effigy of a priest wearing the chasuble with amice, written round which is the conventional inscription of the period, "*Sir Robert de Clyderhou, parson of Wigan, lies here. God on his soul have real mercy.*" Four years after his death "Edward III. granted a licence, dated at the Tower of London 16th March, in the 12th year of his reign (1338-9) to Henry de Clyderhou, to alienate land in mortmain, to messuages in Ribchester and Dutton, 40 acres of land, 40 acres of meadow, two acres of wood, and 6s. rent for a perpetual chaplain, to say mass daily in the Chapel of St. John the Baptist, in Bayley, built by Robert de Clyderhou, late rector of Wigan, for the souls of the said Robert, of Henry de Clyderhou, and of their ancestors, and for the souls of all the faithful."—(Lanc. MSS., vol. 27, p. 19).

A respected gentleman, long resident in the neighbourhood of Bayley, says:—"I have often visited this old chantry. It was barbarously destroyed by order of its owner, Mr. Fenton, about twenty years ago, notwithstanding an earnest remonstrance on the subject. It was a small chapel, without aisles, in a secluded situation. On its north side it was lighted by three pointed windows, exhibiting the curvilinear tracery of Edward II.'s time. At the west end was a bell gable. The tracery of the east window (which, as well as the windows of the south side, had been previously removed) is preserved among the much more recent architecture of the

principal front of Stonyhurst College. Near the chapel was a house for the chantry priest, and opposite to its south side was a mansion, which may be ascribed to the 16th century, but which probably marked the site of the original mansion of the De Clyderou family, or at least that branch of it from which Robert de Clyderhou sprang." In 1330 the celebrated Black Prince was born, and in that same year the Rector of Wigan obtained a new charter for holding a market and fair in Wigan.

The Statute of Mortmain had lately been passed (1281), and so it was illegal for Clyderhou to give this land to the Church; but money could buy anything, and a fine paid to the king was sufficient to quail the conscience of the law-breaker and purchase a royal charter to confirm and carry out the wishes of the donor. This law was wisely instituted for the protection of the heirs of dying persons, who often in their last moments of spiritual unhappiness or hopelessness, or semi-consciousness, might be persuaded by the crafty priests to bequeath their estates to the Church by way of purchasing absolution, and so unjustly deprive their heirs of their lawful possessions. By this Act the king was often enabled to rob the Church and enrich himself, for no small portion of his income was derived from fines surrendered for liberty to endow chantries and churches with lands which would else have been acquired without a fine. Thus it was necessary for Clyderhou to pay the fine before his wishes in regard to Bayley Church could be carried out. By this same law no corporate body—civil or clerical—could take into its possession any lands or property. Thus, neither lands nor tenements could be appropriated by the borough of Wigan, either by purchase or gift, consequently all ancient property and gifts meant for the use and benefit of the town were bestowed by deeds on trustees and their heirs or successors. A special privilege, however, was first bestowed on the borough by the charter of Charles II., allowing an infringement of this law to a very limited extent. By that charter the Corporation were allowed to purchase or accept as gifts to the extent of £50 annually manors, messuages, lands, tenements, meadows, pastures, feedings, boscages, &c., &c.

"We have granted, and by these presents, for us, our heirs, and successors, do grant and give, special licence and free and lawful faculty, power, and authority to the aforesaid Mayor, bailiffs, and burgeses of our borough of Wigan aforesaid, and their successors, to have, receive, and take to themselves and their successors for ever, manors, messuages, lands, tenements, meadows, pastures, feedings, boscages, subboscs, rectories, tithes, rents, revenues, and other hereditaments whatsoever within our kingdom of England and elsewhere within our dominions, as well from us, our heirs, or successors, as from any other person or any other persons whomsoever, so that the same manors, messuages, lands, tenements, meadows, feedings, boscages, subboscs, rectories, tithes, rents, revenues, services, and other hereditaments, so as aforesaid to be had, received, and taken, do not exceed in the whole the clear yearly value of £50 by the year, besides all burthens and reprises, the statutes concerning lands and tenements not to be put into mortmain, or any other statute, act, ordinance, or provision heretofore had, made, ordained, or provided, or any other thing, cause, or matter whatsoever, to the contrary thereof, in any wise notwithstanding. We do also give, and by these presents, for us, our heirs, and successors, do grant to each our subjects and every the subjects of us, our heirs, and successors, special licence and free and lawful power, faculty, and authority that they or any one or

any of them may and can be able to give, sell, grant, bequeath, or alien manors, messuages, lands, tenements, meadows, feedings, pastures, boscages, subboscages, rectories, tithes, rents, revenues, services, and other hereditaments whatsoever to the aforesaid Mayor, bailiffs, and burgesses of the borough aforesaid and their successors, so nevertheless that all the aforesaid manors, messuages, lands, tenements, meadows, feedings, pastures, boscages, subboscages, rectories, tithes, rents, revenues, services, and other hereditaments to the same Mayor, bailiffs, and burgesses of that borough and their successors by virtue of these presents, so, as aforesaid, to be given, granted, bequeathed, or aliened, do not exceed, in the whole, the clear yearly rent or value of £50 by the year, besides all burthens and reprises, the statutes concerning lands or tenements not to be put into mortmain or any other thing, cause, or matter heretofore had, made, published, ordained, or provided to the contrary thereof, in any wise notwithstanding."—(Wigan Charter, 14th Charles II.)

Liverpool, called Lyrypul, in its charter from Henry II., now the second port of the world, was not even at this period constituted a parish, and contained only 140 householders. Its wealth, which is now so great, originated with its success in the slave trade, in reference to which said the famous and religious, but dramatic actor, Cooke: "There isn't a brick in your town that is not cemented with the blood of a slave," thus reminding one of the barbarous customs in Ashanti of mixing the *swish*, or cement, for building royal palaces, with the blood of hundreds of virgins.

Three charters were obtained for Wigan in the long reign of Edward III., but such charters were only equal to the modern passing of bills for local improvements. In 1334 a charter was granted to bridge the Douglas and pave the town, both pressing necessities that the conservative town should long before have had power to carry out. The river previously had to be forded, but during the winter floods this was very dangerous, and often impossible. Foot passengers stepped across on large boulders, placed at convenient distances, or on a rude plank stretched across from bank to bank. When the charter was granted the burgesses did their work well, for long afterwards the historian of the time recorded that it was "a well paved town."

In the 24th Edward III. two charters passed the Great Seal, one constituting Wigan a Parliamentary borough, and the other confirming the liberties of the borough. As the borough was in the barony of Newton the bailiffs of Wigan owed suit and service to the court and fee of that barony for a portion of the Corporation land, although the borough proper is independent of that fee. There were two annual court leets in the borough, the rector's held at Easter, and that of the Corporation at Michaelmas. Dr. Kuerden says that the rector, John Langeton, preferred a claim, besides all the privileges formerly conceded to the burgesses, upon the chattels of fugitives and felons, waif and stray, view of frankpledge, gallows, and timbrel, pleas of withernam, jurisdiction over offences committed within the borough, and exemption for the burgesses from being tried without the borough for matters ensuing within it, saving the pleas which belong to the crown.—(4to. MS. Chet. Soc., fol. 52).

CHAPTER VIII.

*Soldiers—Military Sports—The Earl of Derby left in Pawn in France—Rectors—
John de Winwick—Litigation of De Winwick—Chaddesden, Rector pro tem.—
Dawn of the Reformation—Trade and Prosperity of the Borough—Latin and
English of New Charter.*

MOST men who have distinguished themselves have had to fight the battle of life, often against dreadful odds, and so, too, countries that have been raised to the highest eminence of civilisation and peaceful prosperity have had to wade through blood to their national luxuries. It has been so with Britain. At this period of our history the English sword, either at home or abroad, and sometimes both, was generally unsheathed and in active use, and, consequently, there was little commercial advancement, for war and commerce are not a simultaneously progressive pair. A youth at the critical period of life when character begins to form, when he seems to be passing from boyhood to manhood, is amazed at the daily discovery of his own physical strength which he delights to display. Before this period any taste displayed in his dress, or address, has not been his own, but the result of parental training or example; but then he assumes to have a taste of his own, and devotes as much time to the adornment of his muscular limbs as the coquette does to her bewitching face. His physical ability is the pride of his soul, and his mind is specially fixed on athletic sports, for the young man justly rejoices in his strength. At a similar stage of national existence had our country now arrived. Englishmen had just discovered their national strength, were proud of their prowess, and lost no opportunity of displaying their valour. The advancement of civilisation and mental culture were represented only by the advanced few, and the nation, as a whole, thought of valour, honour, and pageantry. These were to be reaped on the battle-field alone, and the humblest soldier might, if opportunity presented itself, distinguish himself as much as his general, for whole armies were not then guided like units or machines, as in the present day. In a military career alone could distinction be attained, and, as men have some ambition, so all men looked to war for glory. The national feeling ran in a military groove, not for the love of war

but of glory, the illusionary fruit of war. The games of the children in every borough and hamlet were of a competitive and bellicose nature. Every playground was a battle-field, where each brave battle was again and again lost and won. Men in the prime of life rejoiced in war. Old men who had seen active service and had tales to tell were heroes and warriors whom youth delighted to honour.

Every man was a soldier. Fighting, moreover, was better paid for than labour, because there was a greater demand for fighting material, and the spoils of war were the perquisites of the soldiers. The Earl of Derby himself got eight shillings a day; every knight two shillings a day; every esquire a shilling; every bowman on horseback sixpence, and every ordinary bowman on foot fourpence. But the excitements of war were greater than these penurious payments, for then the fortunes of battle depended on the prowess of individual men, and there is no greater glory for half-civilised men than in displaying their valour and personal courage in feats of strength and war. Enemies were attacked in the field, towns besieged and counties invaded, so frequently and persistently, that a large portion of most Englishmen's lives was spent in military service.

The quiet intervals at sieges were filled up by barbarous sports, when the knights "played" for the chiefs at the game of Death. A liking for sports always has been, and will be an English characteristic. On one occasion, during a siege, Lord Derby begged the "Flower of Chivalry" (Sir William Douglas, the Knight of Liddesdale,) to run three courses, or have three jousts, with him, when the latter was wounded by a splinter from his own lance, and was unable to carry on the interesting contest. On another occasion such an entertainment lasted for three days, with twenty on either side, when three of the knights who catered for this amusement were killed—two of them being Lancashire men—and several others severely wounded (1341).

Kings, in olden times, were terrestrial gods, and subjects their willing slaves or guardian angels. The king of England had raised money by every legal and illegal method his advisers could devise, pawned his crowns in France, and yet he was in debt to the extent of a quarter of a million sterling. What a moral downfall and humiliation it is for even a poor labourer to have to resort to the pawnshop with his household goods for means to obtain a scanty subsistence. In by the back-door he stealthily slinks, whilst oppressed by the conscious feeling that he is no worthy member of society. A man who is neither able nor willing to pay his just debts resorts to the most humiliating schemes of evasion. It is then he makes himself familiar with the lanes and byeways of the town, for the very appearance of an honest tradesman raises feelings of self-condemnation within him. The English king was hunted by his creditors, who kept a strict watch on him, and would not let him

out of their sight without great security. The more deeply he was involved the more reckless he became. Every courtier was impoverished by his borrowing. The Earl of Derby was his most faithful follower, and consequently was the greatest sufferer. The Earl, however, was accustomed to this sort of degradation, for he had once before been left in France as security for his sovereign's debts. Never, however, was the king so deeply involved as now, being literally a prisoner in France, with his creditors for gaolers. It so happened that his presence in England had become an absolute necessity, but to pay his debts was an impossibility, and so in 1340 he ignobly absconded from his French creditors with his Queen, and left the Earl of Derby in pawn for his obligations.—(Lives of the Derbys).

The castle of a baron was a fortification and the nucleus of a town. The Earl of Derby was one of the most powerful, and, consequently, one of the most popular of the local barons. Within the walls of his castle many houses were built for the accommodation of his numerous retainers. At this period, too, the neighbouring town, Ormskirk, though not so old as Wigan, had yet a larger population. These were the sources whence the Earl easily mustered his forces when the exigencies of the time demanded.

In 1345, the year before Crecy, a proclamation was issued by the Sheriff of Lancashire, at the King's command, saying that the Earl of Derby was again to set out for France, and that those who wished to join him should at once do so. Many from Wigan and the neighbourhood joined him, as well as those who were legally bound to follow him. He arrived in France with 300 knights, 600 men-at-arms, and 2,000 bowmen, and soon attacked and took Bergerac, against great odds. The Lancashire forces always distinguished themselves, and were largely represented throughout the whole of the hundred years' war.

Men of great influence and importance in their own opinion, and often even in the opinion of their contemporaries, are frequently forgotten in the annals of local history, in which they have been prominent individuals. Many men in Wigan, whose wealth or rank has apparently made them indispensable inhabitants of the borough, have been altogether unknown to a second generation, and almost forgotten by their own. No sooner has the body been buried and the wealth transferred than affection divorces itself from the very memory. Would-be M.P.'s have expended fortunes in purchasing the good-will of the voters; townsmen have spent their lives in the service of the town, striving to advance or adorn it; rectors have preached to the ungodly, wrestled with unbelievers, condoled with the bereaved, and consoled the dying; municipal bodies have improved the borough, advanced its interests, and added to the comforts of the inhabitants; energetic and speculative tradesmen have provided a means of subsistence for numerous families; philanthropists have relieved the

temporary necessities of the poor, and doctors ameliorated the sufferings of the diseased, and yet the very names of many of these benefactors are forgotten, or their names and deeds are merely recorded on scraps of parchment and duly buried in the borough-bin of antiquities. For a whole century the names of the rectors are unknown. Not a mayor's name is recorded until the end of the sixteenth century. Of many rectors the names alone are known. In the few documents preserved so little is recorded that many of them might have been men who merely existed in Wigan, and yet they must have had considerable power, and each must have done something worthy of record either by way of example or warning. Robert de Langeton, the Rector, presented John de Craneno to the Parish Church in 1344, who, having been rector for about six years, was succeeded by John de Winwick, on the presentation of the king (Ed. III.) Of Craneno I have been able to find nothing of importance, but of his successor not a little is known.

In the long reign of Edward III. three dreadful pestilences visited England, and especially in the first (1349) Wigan suffered dreadfully. The inhabitants, in common with other towns, seemed to care nothing for cleanliness. Offal and dirt not only lay in heaps before every door, but the houses themselves displayed the bad taste and filthy habits of the residents. The offal from the shambles was carelessly thrown to dogs in the road or carried through the streets and pitched into the Douglas. Filthiness everywhere seemed to invite the germs of the dreadful epidemic, then raging over Europe, to linger in the town. The harvest of the previous year had been destroyed by dreadful torrents of rain, and the poor, already famine-stricken, were unable to battle against the seeds even of ordinary disease. When the European plague did come, like an insatiable monster, it mowed down whole families of rich and poor, and people became so destitute of human feeling, sympathy, and virtuous bravery, and so alarmed at the dreadful ravages of grim death, that they would neither venture near nor help the plague-stricken, even when they were those who had formerly been their nearest and dearest friends. Parents fled from the houses in which their stricken children lay, friends hurried to the country, and hid in the neighbouring woods from friends who writhed in the short but dreadful agonies of death. Almost every household suffered, and it seemed to many that the time had come when all men must die, and thus many, believing their lifetime to be short, determined to make it a recklessly happy one, and so, without any appearance or pretension of morality, they lived like insatiable wild beasts that neither knew nor feared a hereafter. The dead lay rotting in the streets and in houses, while drunken men prowled about, plundering, cursing, and doing all manner of evil.

When mischief comes, and damage is done, people are more anxious to find a

scapegoat than to discover the cause and apply the stringent remedy. That scapegoat is almost invariably the wrong person. Unprincipled people in power have neither difficulty nor scruple in laying the blame of wrong on the shoulders of subordinates. So it was in superstitious times when calamities visited individuals or nations. When the black death ravaged England people believed it to be the direct visitation of Providence for people's extravagance in dress, and especially for the wearing of long-toed shoes. Enthusiasts managed to persuade the legislators that the divine vengeance was because of the cloth of gold, furs of sables, velvet, ermine, and shoes with long pikes, and an Act was passed accordingly regulating the apparel of peer and peasant. There was no thought of sanitary reform, nor attempt at personal, burghal, or national cleanliness. The people had been overpowered, doctors were helpless, the population succumbed as to an inevitable fate, while the religious part of them devoted themselves to superstitious prayers of faith without works, forgetful that God only helps those who help themselves.

The demands for labourers after the pestilence were so great that, feeling somewhat independent, workmen refused to work, except on their own terms, and, consequently, stringent laws were made to enforce them to do requisite work at parliamentary rates, which, if they still refused to do, they were ordered to be put into the stocks, and for the enforcement of this law stocks were ordered to be made in every town where they did not already exist. Wigan was already provided, and, being one of the populous towns of Lancashire where labourers were plentiful, no doubt the stocks were frequently occupied.

The Rectory of Wigan was always a rich living, and yet in olden times it was generally one only of the many benefices held by the rector. Many of the Wigan rectors were the greatest pluralists of their age. John de Mansel was the greatest of his time, and now John de Wynwick, and even his *locum tenens*, Henry de Chaddesdon, were notorious pluralists. De Wynwick was actively devoted to the king's service, and honours and wealth were literally heaped upon him. He was Chaplain to Edward III., Warden of the Chapel of Clitheroe Castle, Rector of Wigan, and Treasurer of Yorkminster (Raine's MS., *Fasti Eborac.*); and also held stalls at Lichfield, Salisbury, Wells, and Chichester, and was Prebendary of the Prebend of All Saints' in Hungate, in the Cathedral of Lincoln. On November 27th, 1342, he is mentioned as Deputy-constable of the Tower of London (*Foedera*, vol. II., p. 1215). Glorious, but barren victories had been gained in France, and favourites of the warlike king were allowed to follow him to the field, although they could not wield the sword. On June 20th, 1345, John de Wynwick was privileged to follow the king there. This was just one year before the celebrated victory of Crecy, at which he may have been present, for even one whole year was not considered

much by him to leave his many flocks and ecclesiastical livings without a shepherd and a master.

In March of the year following the national calamity (1349) De Wynwick was nominated by the king, as patron of Wigan, to be instituted as rector there by the Bishop of Lichfield; but the right of the Crown to the advowson was disputed, and Sir Robert de Langeton claimed to be the patron of the parish by right of his marriage with the heiress of the Banestres, Barons of Newton, who had undoubtedly been the patrons of Wigan. The case of the King *v.* de Langeton was a whole year before the Courts, and De Langeton failed to establish his claim; the verdict in favour of the Crown was recorded, and the bishop was again requested to institute the king's "beloved clerk, John de Wynwick," to the benefice; still the bishop refused, but he was finally instituted by letters patent, dated Windsor, 26th April, 24th Edward III. This was reversed in 1356, and Langeton's claim confirmed; but de Wynwick held the living all the same until his death on the 10th July, 1359. During the litigation he never sought to derive any benefit from the living, but held it in his power (until a settlement was arrived at) by appointing as his *locum tenens* Henry de Chaddesdon, Canon of Lichfield, a zealous, active, and devoted loyal subject, with livings all over the country.

The new rector was a more useful politician than zealous priest, and was more frequently engaged in the duties of ambassador for his country than those of the cure of souls. The service of the king came before the duties of his Church. The Scotch, at the instigation of the French, had made several futile efforts to throw off the English yoke, and to take vengeance for the past; but at Neville's Cross their king was taken prisoner in 1346, and kept in the Tower of London for eleven years. Negotiations were entered into to bring about peace between the two countries, and de Wynwick was one of the commissioners appointed to meet the Scots for that purpose at Newcastle-on-Tyne, and that two months before he was canonically instituted Rector of Wigan. He seems to have spent the remaining eight years of his life in Wigan. In July, 1352, the Dean and Chapter of York sent him to the king to announce the death of Archbishop Zouché, and to obtain his licence to enable them to elect the archbishop's successor, and in the last year of his life he is mentioned as Keeper of the King's Privy Seal (*Foedera*, vol. III., 452, and *Raine's MS.*, *Fasti Eborac.*) He founded and endowed a chantry out of his great wealth in the Church of Huyton, ordering that his soul should be prayed for once a year for ever.

The three hundred years' war was waging in France. There the bravest Englishmen were distinguishing themselves and winning renown for their country, every town of which was being drained of funds to keep the battle going. The first dawn of

the Reformation was visible and people were longing for civil, political, and religious freedom. Men had come to the conclusion that, as slaves of their fellows, they were not fulfilling their mission on earth. They were willing to make any bargain with their king for liberty, and they were equally ready to take advantage of the slightest embarrassment to purchase their freedom by assisting him with funds. They wanted greater liberties to buy and sell, and protection against outside competitions and disastrous monopolies. They had submitted to illegal taxes till they could bear no longer, and murmurs of ill-omened discontent were heard in every town. They were proud of their national victories, and yet unanimously raised a cry for some reward in return for their devoted shedding of blood.

The charter of 1349 (Edward III.) gave very much extended powers and liberties to the parson and people. In this new charter the rector is for the first time styled the "lord of the borough." In it special mention is made of the delinquencies of the parson and people, and of the forfeiture of the charter now confirmed to De Wynwick as a special mark of royal affection, and for his faithful and laborious obsequiousness. Royalty is willing to let bygones be bygones, and to forget and forgive all past offences; forgiveness being commemorated in these words:—

"We have granted for us and our heirs that, although the same John or his predecessors, parsons of the said Church and Lords of the Borough, or the aforesaid burgesses, or their antecessors or predecessors, hitherto have not used the liberties and quittances in the said Charter contained, or any of them, or the same Borough; and the liberties aforesaid, or any of them, may have been as it were forfeited, or also become of abuse or of non-claim of those liberties, or otherwise howsoever, may have been taken into the hands of us or any of our progenitors before the Justices last itinerant in the County of Lancaster or other Justices whomsoever of us or our progenitors in whatsoever time past; nevertheless, the same John and his successors, parsons of the said Church and Lords of the Borough aforesaid, may have that Borough, with all the liberties to a free Borough belonging, and also all and singular liberties and quittances in the said Charter contained and specified for themselves and their Burgesses of that Borough for ever, and for the future may fully enjoy and use them."

From that charter we learn that Wigan had become a very important market-town. These markets were not merely for the accommodation of country people in order that they might supply themselves with provisions. During them even merchants of the town had to shut their places of business and buy and sell in the booths of the market. All sales and purchases had to be effected within a limited time, else both buyers and sellers were subject to a fine, and sometimes to the confiscation of their commodities. Travelling merchants with caravans, after the Oriental fashion, went from market to market supplying the local merchants with the requisite merchandise and buying up the provincial produce for selling in other towns. Thus were goods brought wholesale to Wigan, purchased by the local dealers, and retailed to their customers. The travelling merchants, or foreigners, as they were called, seemed

to the inhabitant burgesses, who never dreamt of the true laws of political economy, to have by far the best of the bargain, for, although supplying them with what they wanted, they were grieved to find them carry the money out of the town, apparently to the loss both of themselves and their lord of the manor. The Merchant Guild took the matter into consideration, and imposed duties of protection which were afterwards levied by the rector. This Merchant Guild, which was really the original Corporation of the town, regulated mercantile transactions, and to them this power, already assumed by them, was legally granted by the charter. But there was a greater privilege in the charter than this. These Wigan burghers already discovered that, if they did not look after their business, their business would not look after them. Like honest, hard-working men, who were anxious to prosper, they grumbled at being called away, often at their busiest times, to consider or judge the conduct of a scoundrel, and much more did they grumble when cantankerous people by some petty complaint summoned them to court. It was a grievous, vexatious, and expensive thing when this happened in Wigan; but it was much more so when several days were thus wastefully spent in Lancaster, and that either to judge or be judged by strangers. This new charter freed the Wigan burgesses from such burdens and harassing cares. They were neither to be tried at Lancaster nor summoned there as jurors, and this, of course, necessitated more active legislation in Wigan. They were to judge, fine, condemn, and rule themselves, except where more than local law was offended. The merchants, weavers, fullers, dyers, horners, and tanners of the town, with the rector at their head, were to be their own rulers. Their previous loyalty and prosperity were acknowledged, and extended confidence and power given them. Power was given to settle their own quarrels; to arrange mercantile differences; to fix and impose fines on offenders, and to enforce the keeping of covenants and contracts. Of course, the rector was still lord of the town, but the burgesses had their charters defining accurately his powers and their liberties, which latter became more extensive in every charter, either for services done to the nation, or by purchase from the rector, who yet received Frankpledge from all his tenants and punished offenders in his own gaol, and detained those felons who had been committed by the burgesses to take their trial at the Lancaster assize. By this charter of 1349 a borough seal was ordained to be used in confirmation of acts done by the Corporation. It consisted of two pieces, the greater part of which was to remain in the custody of the mayor, or keeper of the borough, and the lesser piece in the safe keeping of a clerk appointed by the Crown.

24to. EDWARDI III.

"Edwardus Dei gratia Rex Angliæ et Franciæ et Dominus Hiberniæ Archiepiscopis Episcopis Abbatibus Prioribus Comitibus Baronibus Justiciariis Vicecomitibus Præpositis Ministris et omnibus Ballivis et Fidelibus suis Salutem: Inspecimus Cartam Confirmationis Domini Edwardi nuper Regis Angliæ patris nostri in hæc Verba Edwardus Dei gratia Rex Angliæ Dominus Hiberniæ et Dux Aquitanniæ Archiepiscopis Episcopis Abbatibus Prioribus Comitibus Baronibus Justiciariis Vicecomitibus Præpositis Ministris et omnibus Ballivis et Fidelibus suis Salutem: Inspecimus Cartam quam celebris memoriæ Dominus Henricus quondam Rex Angliæ Avus noster fecit Johanni Mansel dudum Parsonæ Ecclesiæ de Wygan in hæc Verba:—Henricus Dei gratia Rex Angliæ Dominus Hiberniæ Dux Normanniæ Aquitanniæ et Comes d'Andes Archiepiscopis Episcopis Abbatibus Prioribus Comitibus Baronibus Justiciariis Vicecomitibus Præpositis Ministris et omnibus Ballivis et Fidelibus suis Salutem: Sciatis nos concessisse et hac Carta nostra confirmasse et nobis et Hæredibus nostris dilecto et fideli nostro Johanni Mansel Parsonæ Ecclesiæ de Wygain quod Villa sua de Wygayn Burgus sit imperpetuum et quod Burgenses ejusdem Burgi habeant Gildam Mercatoriam cum Hansa et aliis libertatibus et liberis consuetudinibus ad Gildam illam pertinentibus Et quod nullus qui non sit de Gilda illa Mercandisam aliquam in prædicto Burgo faciat nisi de voluntate eorundem Burgensium Concessimus etiam eisdem Burgensibus et eorum Hæredibus quod habeant Soke et Sak et Thol, et Theam, et Attachiammentum infra Burgum prædictum es Infangenthef et Utfangenthef, et quod quieti sint per totam Terram nostram et per omnes portus Marit de Thelonio Lestagio Passagio Pontagio et Stallagio Et quod nullam Secutionem Comitatum seu Wapentachiorum faciant de Tenuris suis quas tenent infra Burgum prædictum—Concessimus etiam eisdem Burgensibus et eorum Hæredibus quod quicumque Mercatores petierint Burgum prædictum cum Mercandis suis de quocunque loco fuerint sive extranei sive alii qui de pace nostra fuerint vel de Licentia nostra in terram nostram venerint salvo et secure ad prædictum Burgum veniant cum Mercandis suis et salvo ibidem morentur et salvo inde recedant faciendo inde rectas et debitas Consuetudines Prohibemus etiam ne quis prædictis Burgensibus injuriam vel dampnum seu molestiam faciat super forisfacturam nostram decem Librarum.—QUARE volumus et firmiter præcipimus pro nobis et Hæredibus nostris quod prædicta Villa de Wygayn liber Burgus sit imperpetuum et quod prædicti Burgenses habeant prædictam Gildam mercatoriam cum Hansa et cum aliis Libertatibus et liberis Consuetudinibus ad Gildam illam pertinentibus et quod habeant omnes alias libertates et liberas Consuetudines et Quietantias sicut prædictum est:—Hujus Testibus *Ricardo Comite Cornubense fratre nostro*, Rogero de Pygot Comite Norfolcense, Petro de Saband, Willhelmo de Ferrariis, Radulpho Fit Nichol, Willhelmo de Cantilupo, Johanne de Plesset, Paulino Peyner, Roberto de Mustengros, Bartholomæo Peche et aliis. Datum per Manum nostram apud Wodestok vicesimo sexto die Augusti Anno Regni nostri Septimo.—Nos autem Concessionem et Confirmationem prædictas et ratas habentes et gratas eas pro nobis et Hæredibus nostris quantum in nobis est dilecto Clerico nostro Johanni de Winewyk nunc Parsonæ Ecclesiæ prædictæ et Domino Burgi prædicti et Successoribus suis Parsonis ejusdem Ecclesiæ et Dominis Burgi illius pro se et Burgensibus suis ejusdem Burgi concedimus et confirmamus sicut Carta prædicta rationabiliter testatur—Præterea ob Affectionem specialem quam ad præfatum Johannem præteriti fidelis et laboriosi Obsequii per ipsum a longo tempore nobis impensaverimus et habemus volentes ei uberiorem Gratiam facere in hac Parte concessimus pro nobis et Hæredibus nostris quod licet idem Johannes vel Prædecessores sui Parsonæ dictæ Ecclesiæ et Domini Burgi illius aut præfati Burgenses seu eorum Antecessores vel Prædecessores Libertatibus et Quietanciis in dicta Carta contentis seu earum aliqua hactenus usi non fuerint seu idem Burgus et Libertates prædictæ vel earum aliqua coram Justiciariis ultimo itinerantibus in Comitatu Lancastriæ seu aliis Justiciariis nostris vel Progenitorum nostrorum quibuscunque quocunque tempore præterito in Manus

nostras aut alicujus Progenitorum nostrorum prehendantur tanquam forisfacti seu etiam propter Abusum vel Nonclamium Libertatum illarum aut alio quovis modo capti fuissent, idem tamen Johannes et Successores sui Personæ dictæ Ecclesiæ et Domini Burgi prædicti Burgum illum cum omnibus Libertatibus ad liberum Burgum spectantibus necnon omnes et singulas Libertates et Quietancias in dicta Carta contentas et specificatas pro se et eorum Burgensibus Burgi illius imperpetuum habeant eisque de cætero plene gaudeant et utantur Et etiam imperpetuum habeant omnes alias Libertates et liberas Consuetudines quas idem Johannes aut Prædecessores sui pro se et Burgensibus suis prædictis retroactis temporibus in Burgo prædicto et alibi usi sunt rationabilitur et gvasi sine Occasione vel Impedimento nostri vel Hæredum nostrorum Justiciorum Executorum Vicecomitum Ballivorum seu Ministrorum nostrorum aut aliorum quorumcunque concessimus etiam pro nobis et Hæredibus nostris et hac Carta nostra confirmavimus præfato Johanni quod ipse et Successores sui Personæ Ecclesiæ illius et Domini Burgi prædicti imperpetuum habeant Visum Franci Plegii de omnibus hominibus et Tenentibus suis in dicto Burgo et libertatibus ejusdem ac aliis ibidem residentibus cum omnibus ad hujusmodi Visum spectantibus sive pertinentibus et quod iidem homines tenentes et residentes quieti sint imperpetuum de Turnis Vicecomitum et quod ad eandem Turnam de cætero venire non teneantur nec ad hoc aliqua litera compellantur et quod idem Johannes et Successores sui prædicti habeant imperpetuum Cognitiones omnium placitorum per Ballivos suos ibidem tam, videlicet, de Terris Tenementis et Redditibus infra dictum Burgum et libertatem ejusdem existentibus quam de Transgressionibus Convencionibus Contractibus et Querelis infra eosdem Burgum et Libertatem emergentibus sive factis ac etiam placitorum Assisarum de Tenuris infra dictum Burgum et Libertatem ejusdem quæ coram nobis et Hæredibus nostris ac Justiciariis nostris et Hæredum nostrorum ad Assisas in Comitatu Lancastriæ capiendum assignatis arrannari contingant Necnon Placitorum de Vetito Namio et aliorum Placitorum ibidem emergentium quorumcunque Et quod Justiciarii et alii quicunque coram quibus hujusmodi placita fuerint seu hujusmodi assisas arrannari contigerit, cum cogniciones eorundem placitorum et assisarum ex parte præfati Johannis vel successorum suorum prædictorum petitis fuerint hoc eis sine difficultate allocent et brevia originalia ac processus, si qui inde habiti fuerint, eis vel ballivis suis prædictis faciant liberari Et quod nullus burgensis dicti burgi prædicti vel alius residents in eodem placitetur vel implacitetur coram nobis vel hæredibus nostris aut aliquibus justiciariis vicecomitibus seu ministris nostris vel hæredum nostrorum extra burgum prædictum de terris et tenementis quæ sunt in burgo illo nec de transgressionibus conventionibus contractibus seu querelis in eodem burgo emergentibus seu de aliquibus ibidem ortum habentibus set omnia hujusmodi placita et querelæ quæ coram nobis vel hæredibus nostris aut justiciariis nostris de banco vel aliis justiciariis seu ministris nostris quibuscunque seu etiam in comitatu vel alibi summoneri contigit vel attachiari extra dictum burgum vel infra placitanda coram ballivis personæ dictæ ecclesiæ qui pro tempore fuerint et non aliis infra eundem burgum placitentur et summonentur Et quod idem ballivi fines et amerciamenta ibidem coram eisdem facta et adjudicata ad opus prædicti Johannis et successorum suorum prædictorum levare Necnon de omnibus coram eis recuperatis sive recognitis et de dampnis coram eis adjudicatis executiones facere possint infra prædictum burgum et libertatem ejusdem absque occasione vel impedimento cujuscunque et quod burgenses burgi illius de placitis infra prædictum burgum emergentibus seu etiam de aliquibus ibidem factis aut perpetratis non convincantur per forinsecos set solummodo per comburgenses nisi placita illa tangant nos vel hæredes nostros seu parsonam ecclesiæ prædictæ aut communitatem burgi prædicti:—Præterea, ad maliciam quorumcunque malefactorum infra dictum burgum seu libertatem ejusdem delinquentium melius et celerius coerendum, concessimus pro nobis et hæredibus nostris et hac carta nostra confirmavimus præfato Johanni et successoribus suis parsonis ecclesiæ prædictæ quod de omnibus excessibus oppressionibus extorsionibus conspirationibus confederationibus gravaminibus quibuscunque infra eosdem burgum et libertatem perpetratis et emergentibus ipse et successores sui prædicti per seneschallos seu ballivos suos et alios per ipsos ad hoc deputandos habeant potestatem inquirendi (quoties opus fuerit) et ad eadem tam ad sectam partis quam aliàs ex

officio audiendum et terminandum et executiones in de faciendum secundum legem et consuetudinem Regni nostri Et per forinsecos de hujusmodi malefactis infra dictos burgum seu libertatem perpetratis deinceps contigerit aliquos in hujusmodi casibus impetiri seu indicari per præsentationes indicamenta aut inquisitiones coram vicecomitibus justiciariis aut aliis ministris nostris vel hæredum nostrorum quibuscunque statim postquam tales malefactores extra dictum burgum per ministros nostros vel hæredum nostrorum hujusmodi capti fuerint absque difficultate aliquali deliverent hujusmodi præsentationes indicamenta sive inquisitiones una cum malefactoribus sic captis ministris dicti Johannis et successoribus et successorum suorum quandocunque dicti ministri nostri et hæredum nostrorum per ballivos ejusdem Johannis et successorum suorum inde requisiti fuerint ad audiendas et terminandas in curia dicti Johannis et successorum suorum prædictorum infra burgum prædictum *Ita quod* vicecomites justiciarii aut alii ministri nostri vel hæredum nostrorum de nulla re infra dictum burgum seu libertatem ejusdem emergente *præterquam* de felonis se intromittant sed quod dictus Johannes et successores sui personæ ecclesiæ prædictæ per ministros suos supradictos habeant cognitionem omnium et singulorum supra dictorum adeo plene sicut nos habere deberemus una cum exitibus forisfactis amerciamentis finibus et redemptionibus in hujusmodi casibus emergentibus imperpetuum *Volumus* insuper et *concedimus* pro nobis et hæredibus nostris quod idem Johannes et successores sui personæ ecclesiæ prædictæ per ministros suos supradictos habeant potestatem inquirendi (quoties opus fuerit) de quibuscunque felonis infra burgum et libertatem prædictas perpetratis et felones hujusmodi capiendi et arrestandi carcerique personæ prædictæ ibidem mancipandi in eodem carcere moraturos usque ad primam deliveracionem gaolæ nostræ et hæredum nostrorum Lancastriæ ita quod tunc indictamenta super felones prædictos sic facta una cum corporibus eorundem felonum mittantur coram justitiariis nostris et hæredum nostrorum ad gaolam prædictam deliverandum assignatis ut coram eis justitia inde fiat secundum legem et consuetudinem regni nostri et nihilominus ut præfati burgenses mercandis suis liberius et quietius intendere valeant concedimus pro nobis et hæredibus nostris quod iidem burgenses et eorum hæredes et successores infra dictum burgum et libertatem ejusdem imperpetuum hanc habeant libertatem, videlicet, *Quod* ipsi vel eorum aliqui non ponantur in assisis juratis recognitionibus seu inquisitionibus aliquibus extra dictum burgum capiendis sive juratæ et inquisitiones hujusmodi ad secutionem nostram vel hæredum nostrorum sive aliorum aut alias ex officio fuerunt capiendæ—Et insuper cum ad dictum burgum tam mercatorum quam aliorum causa negociandi et alias frequens sit concursus *concessimus* pro nobis et hæredibus nostris dicto Johanni quod ipse et successores sui personæ ecclesiæ prædictæ et domini burgi supradicti imperpetuum habeant in eodem burgo quoddam sigillum de duabus peciis prout moris est pro recognitionibus debitorum ibidem juxta formam statutorum pro mercatoribus editorum accipiendum et quod major pecia sigilli prædicti remaneat in custodia majoris vel custodis burgi prædicti qui pro tempore fuerit vel alicujus privati hominis de majoribus et discreciis hominibus burgi illius ad hoc de assensu præfati Johannis vel successorum suorum prædictorum eligendi si major vel custos ibidem non fuerit *Et quod* minor pecia sigilli prædicti remaneat in custodia cujusdam clerici por nos et hæredes nostros ibidem ad hoc secundum formam statutorum prædictorum deputandi *Et quod* isdem major sive custos aut alius qui custodiam majoris peciæ sigilli prædicti habuerit et clericus de cætero recognitiones debitorum ibidem recipiant juxta formam statutorum *Et quod* * executioni rebus demandantibus † de recognitionibus per alios majores sive custodes et clericos hujusmodi alibi infra regnum nostrum Angliæ in hujusmodi casibus hactenus fieri consueverint —Hujus testibus venerabilibus Patribus J. Wygorn Episcopo Cancellario nostro, W. Wynton Episcopo Thesaurario nostro, Edwardo Principe Walliæ Cornubiæ et filio nostro charissimo, Henrico Lancastriæ, Ricardo Arundel et Willhelmo Huntyndon Comitibus, Johanne de Gu . . . Betherfæi Senescallo Hospitii nostri et aliis—Data per manum nostram apud Westmonasterium quarto die Augusti anno regni nostri Angliæ vicesimo quarto regni vero nostri Franciæ undecimo.”

* (*Hic*) sex vel septem, et † (*Hic*) quinque vel sex, Verba ob Attritionem pergamenæ, legere non est.

24TH EDWARD III.

"Edward, by the grace of God, King of England and France and Lord of Ireland. To all archbishops, bishops, abbots, priors, earls, barons, justices, sheriffs, chief ministers and bailiffs, and his faithful subjects greeting: We have inspected the charter of confirmation of the Lord Edward, late King of England, our grandfather, in these words: Edward by the grace of God, King of England, Lord of Ireland, and Duke of Aquitaine. To all archbishops, bishops, abbots, priors, counts, barons, justices, sheriffs, chief ministers and bailiffs, and his faithful subjects greeting. We have inspected the charter which the Lord Henry, of renowned memory, formerly King of England, our grandfather, made to John Mansel, late parson of the church of Wigan, in these words: Henry by the grace of God, King of England, Lord of Ireland, Duke of Normandy, Aquitaine, and Count of Angers. To all archbishops, bishops, abbots, priors, earls, barons, justices, sheriffs, chief ministers and bailiffs, and faithful subjects greeting. Know ye that we have granted and by this our charter confirmed for us and our heirs to our beloved and faithful John Mansel, parson of the Church of Wigan, that his Vill of Wigan may be a borough for ever, and that the burgesses of the same borough may have a Guild Merchant, with a treasury and other liberties and free customs to that Guild belonging, and that no one who is not of that Guild may make any merchandise in the aforesaid borough, unless of the will of the same burgesses. We have also granted to the same burgesses and their heirs that they may have soke and sak and thol and theam and attachment within the said borough and infangenthef and utfangenthef, and that they may be free throughout our whole land and through all the ports of the sea from toll, custom, passage, pontage, and stallage, and that they may make no suit of the Counties or Wapentakes concerning their tenures which they hold within the borough aforesaid. We have also granted to the same burgesses and their heirs, that whatsoever traders shall come to the borough aforesaid with their merchandises, of whatsoever place they shall be, foreigners or others, who shall be of our peace or of our leave shall come into our land, may come safely and securely to the aforesaid borough with their merchandises and safely there may stay and safely from thence may return by doing there the right and due customs; we do also prohibit that no one may do injury or damage or molestation unto the aforesaid burgesses upon our forfeiture of £10. Wherefore we do will and firmly command for us and our heirs that the aforesaid Vill of Wigan be a borough for ever, and that the aforesaid burgesses may have the aforesaid Guild Merchant, with the Hanaper and with the other liberties and free customs to that Guild belonging, and that they may have all other liberties and free customs and quittances as is aforesaid. Witnesses hereto, Richard Earl of Cornwall, our brother, Roger le Pygot Earl of Norfolk, Peter de Saband, William de Ferrers, Ralph Fit Nichol, William de Cantilupo, John de Plesset, Paul Peyner, Robert de Mustengros, Bartholemy Peche, and others. Given by our hand at Woodstock the 26th day of August, in the 30th year of our reign. And we holding the grants, confirmation, and prohibition aforesaid ratified and in good part do grant and confirm for us and our heirs as much as in us is unto our beloved clerk, Robert de Clyderhou, now the parson of the church aforesaid, and his successors, parsons of the same church, and the burgesses of the borough aforesaid, like as the charter aforesaid reasonably testifies; and as the aforesaid Robert and his predecessors, parsons of the church aforesaid, and the burgesses aforesaid and their ancestors, have hitherto reasonably used and enjoyed the liberties aforesaid, from the time of making the charter aforesaid. Witnesses, Gilbert de Clare Earl of Gloucester and Hereford, Humphrey de Bohun Earl of Hereford and Essex, Adamaro de Valentia Earl of Pembroke, Hugh le Despencer, Edmund de Malo Lacu, steward of our household, and others. Given by our hand at the New Monastery, the 7th day of June, in the 7th year of our reign; and we, holding the grants and confirmations aforesaid ratified and agreeable, do grant and confirm them for us and our heirs, as much as in us is, to our beloved clerk, John de Wynewyk, now the parson of the church aforesaid and lord of the borough aforesaid, and his successors, parsons of the same church and lords of the borough, for themselves and their burgesses of the same borough, like as the charter aforesaid reasonably testifies.

Moreover, because of the special affection which we bear and have for the aforesaid John, by reason of his faithful and laborious obsequiousness, by him for a long time bestowed upon us, we being willing to do him the more abundant grace in this behalf, have granted for us and our heirs that, although the same John or his predecessors, parsons of the said church and lords of the borough, or the aforesaid burgesses or their antecessors or predecessors, hitherto have not used the liberties and quittances in the said charter contained or any of them or the same borough and the liberties aforesaid or any of them may have been as it were forfeited, or also become of abuse, or of nonclaim of those liberties or otherwise howsoever, may have been taken into the hands of us or any of our progenitors before the justices last itinerant in the county of Lancaster or other justices whomsoever of us or our progenitors in whatsoever time past; nevertheless the same John and his successors, parsons of the said church and lords of the borough aforesaid, may have that borough with all the liberties to a free borough belonging, and also all and singular liberties and quittances in the said charter contained and specified for themselves and their burgesses of that borough for ever, and for the future may fully enjoy and use them. And also for ever may have all other liberties and free customs which the same John or his predecessors aforesaid for themselves and their burgesses aforesaid have reasonably used and enjoyed in times past in the borough and elsewhere, without the let or hindrance of us or our heirs, our justices, executors, sheriffs, bailiffs or ministers, or others whomsoever. We have also granted for us and our heirs and by this our charter have confirmed to the aforesaid John that he and his successors, parsons of that church and lords of the borough aforesaid, for ever may have a view of Frankpledge of all their men and tenants in the said borough and the liberty thereof and others there resident, with all things belonging or pertaining to a view of this kind. And that the same men, tenants and residents, may be acquitted for ever from the sheriff-turns, and that they may not be held to come to the same turns for the future, nor may thereto in any wise be compelled. And that the said John and his successors aforesaid may have for ever cognisance of all pleas by their bailiffs there (that is to say), as well concerning lands, tenements, and rents existing within the said borough and the liberty thereof, as concerning transgressions, covenants, contracts, and complaints within the said borough and liberty arising or made; and also of pleas of assizes concerning tenures within the said borough and the liberty thereof which shall happen to be arraigned before us and our heirs and the justices of us and our heirs assigned to hold the assizes in the county of Lancaster. And also of pleas de vetito namio and other pleas whatsoever there arising, and that our justices and others whomsoever, before whom pleas of this sort shall be or it shall happen that assizes of this sort shall be arraigned, when the cognisances of those pleas and assizes shall be required on behalf of the aforesaid John or his successors aforesaid may place this to them without difficulty, and may cause the original writs and processes, if any therein shall have been had, to be delivered to them or their bailiffs aforesaid. And that no burgess of the said borough or other resident in the same may be pleaded or impleaded before us or our heirs or any justices, sheriffs, or ministers of us or our heirs out of the borough aforesaid, concerning lands and tenements which are in that borough, nor concerning transgressions, covenants, contracts, or complaints arising in the same borough, or concerning any things having rise there. But all pleas and complaints of this sort which shall happen to be summoned or attached out of or within the said borough to be pleaded before us or our heirs or our justices of the bench or other our justices or ministers whatsoever, and whether also in the county or elsewhere, may be pleaded and summoned within the said borough before the bailiffs of the parson of the said church who shall be for the time and no others. And that the same bailiffs may be able within the borough aforesaid and the liberty thereof to levy the fines and amerciaments made and adjudged there before them to the aforesaid John and his successors aforesaid; and also to make recoveries of all things recovered or recognisable before them, and of the damages before them adjudged without the let, right, or hindrance of any one whomsoever. And that the burgesses of that borough be not convicted by foreigners, but only by their fellow burgesses concerning pleas arising

within the aforesaid borough, or also concerning any things there done or perpetrated, unless those pleas touch us or our heirs or the parson of the said church or the community of the borough aforesaid. Moreover, for the better and more speedy restraining the maliciousness of whatsoever malefactors offending within the said borough or the liberty thereof, we have granted for us and our heirs, and by this our charter have confirmed to the aforesaid John and his successors, parsons of the church aforesaid, that he and his successors aforesaid, by their stewards or bailiffs and others by them to this to be deputed, may have power of inquiring as often as need shall be concerning all excesses, oppressions, extortions, conspiracies, confederacies, and other transgressions and grievances whatsoever within the same borough and liberty perpetrated and arising, by virtue of their office, and to hear and determine the same as well at the suit of the party as otherwise, and therein to make executions according to the law and customs of our kingdom. And moreover, after that it shall happen that any foreigners, in cases of this sort, be impeached or indicted by presentments, indictments, or inquisitions before the sheriffs, justices, or other ministers whomsoever of us or our heirs whomsoever concerning malefactions of this sort within the said borough or liberty perpetrated, that they may without any sort of difficulty, immediately after such malefactors of this sort shall have been taken out of the said borough by the ministers of us or our heirs, deliver the presentments, indictments, and inquisitions of this sort, together with the malefactors so taken, to the ministers of the said John and his successors and of their successors, whensoever the ministers of us and our heirs shall be thereunto required by the bailiffs of the same John and his successors, to be heard and determined in the court of the said John and his successors aforesaid within the borough aforesaid: so that the sheriffs, justices, or other ministers of us or our heirs may introduce themselves concerning nothing arising within the said borough or liberty thereof besides than concerning felonies. But that the said John and his successors, parsons of the church aforesaid, may have the cognisance of all and singular the abovesaid so fully as we ought to have together with the issuings, forfeitures, amerciaments, fines, and redemptions in cases of this sort arising for ever. Moreover, we do will and grant for us and our heirs that the same John and his successors, parsons of the church aforesaid, by their ministers aforesaid may have the power of inquiring as often as need shall be concerning whatsoever felonies within the borough and liberty aforesaid perpetrated, and of taking and arresting and of confining, in the prison of the parson aforesaid there, felons of this sort in the same prison, to remain until the first delivery of the gaol of us and our heirs at Lancaster; so that then the indictment so made upon the felons aforesaid, together with the bodies of the same felons, may be sent forth before the justices of us and our heirs assigned to deliver the gaol aforesaid, and that before them justice may be done therein according to the law and custom of our kingdom. And nevertheless, that the aforesaid burgesses may be able more freely and quietly to proceed in their merchandises, we have granted for us and our heirs that the same burgesses and their heirs and successors resident within the said borough and liberty may for ever have this liberty (to wit) that they or any of them may not be put in any assizes, juries, recognitions, or inquisitions whatsoever to be taken out of the said borough, whether the juries and inquisitions of this sort shall be to be taken at the suit of us or our heirs or others or otherwise ex officio. And, moreover, whereas, there has been a frequent concourse at the said borough as well of merchants or others for the sake of trading and otherwise, we have granted for us and our heirs to the said John, that he and his successors, parsons of the church aforesaid and lords of the borough aforesaid, may for ever within the said borough have a certain seal by us to be ordained of two pieces as is of custom to be used for recognisances of debts there according to the form of the statutes published for merchants, and that the greater part of the seal aforesaid may remain in the custody of the Mayor or keeper of the borough aforesaid who shall be for the time, or other private man of the greater and more discreet men of the said borough to this to be elected of the assent of the aforesaid John and his successors aforesaid, if there shall not be a mayor or keeper there, and that the lesser piece of the said seal may remain in the custody of a certain clerk to be deputed by us there to this according to the form of

the statutes aforesaid, and that the said Mayor or keeper or other person who shall have the custody of the greater piece of the seal aforesaid and clerk may for the future receive recognisances of debts there according to the form of the same statutes, and that* to execution, circumstances so requiring† as heretofore in the like cases respecting recognisances have been usually done by other Mayors or the like Keepers and Clerks elsewhere within our kingdom of England:—
 Witnesses hereof, the Venerable Fathers J. Wygorn, Bishop, our Chancellor; W. Wynton, Bishop, our Treasurer; Ed . . . Prince of Wales, Duke of Cornwall, and Earl of . . . our most dear son; Henry of Lancaster, Richard Arundel, and William Huntynndon, Earls; John de G . . . steward of our household, and others. Given by our hand at Westminster, the 4th day of August, in the 24th year of our reign of England, and in the 11th of our reign of France.

* (*Here*) 6 or 7, and † (*Here*) 5 or 6, words (*the parchment is so worn*) are illegible.

CHAPTER IX.

*Borough Monopolies—Labour and Capital—De Lostock—Campeden—Sports—Fairs—
Chapmen—Tradesmen—Spinning—Wigan College—Church—Charters Ratified.*

AT this period of its existence the borough entered on a career of prospective prosperity, for almost all the national trades were represented within the walls. Every trade begets another, and the prospering weavers of Wigan provided an abundance of work for bleachers and dyers. Its manufactured goods were to be found in all the home-markets, and were frequently exported to foreign countries. But the laws of political economy were unstudied because unknown. The inhabitants gloried in their monopolies, and the importance with which they surrounded them. The secret of a nation's wealth was supposed to consist in keeping as much money as possible within the kingdom, and in prohibiting foreign competition. The Wigan burgesses reasoned after the same manner, and never doubted the soundness of their logic. With them money was the measure, not the representative, of wealth. The Guilds looked after the interests and monopolies of the town, and individuals considered their own special trades as personal properties on which no one had a right to encroach or trespass, and the inhabitants or consumers never deemed that competition is not only the life of trade, but the very origin of cheapness. It was believed by all that special privileges to towns and individuals were the source of general prosperity, consequently monopolies which were fashionable in Wigan kept prosperity comparatively stagnant instead of progressive. Every dealer was compelled, both by local and national laws, to restrict his sales to one kind of merchandise, in order that guilds, fraternities, and tradesmen might be protected. Every tradesman had to declare what his special merchandise was, and to that he was restricted as closely as if he had received a special licence for that alone. Prices were regulated by law, and specified places and times for buying and selling adhered to. The great mistake was made of attempting to regulate domestic matters by Act of Parliament. Parliament foolishly and vainly attempted even to dictate what quantity and quality of dress should be worn. Servants were forbidden to wear cloth of a greater value than two marks (£1 6s. 8d.) for the entire dress, and

workmen's dresses were not allowed to exceed twelve-pence a yard. Many of the trades now practised only by men were then the daily labours of the women of the borough. This arose from the fact that every man was compelled to be ever ready for war, and the women, in the absence of the men, had habituated themselves to these necessary labours. They were the brewers, bakers, carders, spinners, and tailors of the day. Labour was plentiful in Wigan, and it had fewer slaves than many of the large towns. Moreover, it was one of the few English boroughs from which workmen could remove, in search of work, at their pleasure. As a consequence of these special privileges, the first great struggle of labour against capital, which had its climax in 1350, caused less agitation in Wigan than might otherwise have been expected. With the advancement of civilisation slaves had struggled for freedom, and craftsmen combined for extended liberties. Unions became common, but, happily, strikes did not exist until the Black Death itself seemed to favour the unionist projects. By it the labour class had been decimated, and the abundance of labour and scarcity of labourers gave the working classes courage to be determined in driving hard bargains with the capitalists, who considered the labour revolution the death-blow to their prosperity. To liberate slaves of all ages suddenly is very questionable wisdom. Many of those set free at this time had been bondmen for a lifetime, and the peasantry of England lost the golden opportunities of 1350 because they were uneducated and unaccustomed to such brightened prospects. Where they had been accustomed humbly to obey they then insolently demanded; because there was pressing need for their services, they made exorbitant charges for them, and those awoke the active sympathies of Parliament in favour of capitalists. As it was in rural districts, so it was in the towns, where workmen had combined, and strikes were frequent; men were reduced through their own hasty overbearance by Act of Parliament to a more servile condition than before. It was enacted that:—

"Every man or woman, of whatsoever condition, free or bond, able in body, and within the age of three score years, and not having of his own whereof he may live, nor land of his own about the tillage of which he may occupy himself, and not seeing any other, shall be bound to serve the employer who shall require him to do so, and shall take only the wages which were accustomed to be taken in the neighbourhood where he is bound to serve."

Harder conditions still were made with workmen, so that they were reduced to great poverty. Piers Ploughman describes the condition of a farmer at this time thus:—

"I have no penny pullets for to buy, nor neither geese nor pigs, but two green cheeses, a few curds and cream, and an oaten cake, and two loaves of beans and bran baken for my children. I have no salt bacon nor no cooked meat collops for to make, but I have parsley and leeks and many cabbage plants, and eke a cow and a calf, and a cart mare to draw a-field my dung while the drought lasteth, and by this livelihood we must all live till Lammas-tide, and by that time I hope to have harvest in my croft."

The Rectors De Langeton and De Lostock both resigned their livings in Wigan, but for what reason it is not known. The former only retained the office for a few months, and the latter for two years. When De Langeton resigned, the patron of the living, Robert Langeton, presented De Lostock who was instituted on September 4th, 1359, and when he resigned, the patron, Ralph Langeton, was a minor, and thus his father, Robert, must have died during the short period in which his relative held the rectorship. John, Earl of Lancaster, the guardian of Ralph, appointed Walter de Campeden, who was instituted January 4th, 1361. He was rector for nine years, during which time, on August 24th, 1366, he obtained a licence from his bishop to absent himself from his Church of Wigan "as long as he pleased."—(Not. Cest. Lib. V., fol. 19-6). This unlimited leave of absence was probably granted because of ill-health, as he died within four years of receiving it; moreover, it seems to be a proof of the bishop's great confidence in the rector's fidelity. No further particulars of him are known. At the time of his death the patron, Ralph, had attained his majority, and he appointed his relative, James de Langeton, who was instituted August 24th, 1370. When he had held the living for three years he applied for and obtained licence of non-residence for one year from his bishop.—(Not. Cest. Lib. V., fol. 28 b.) This long vacation seems to have been more for pleasure than for the benefit of his health, as the bishop certainly had scruples as to the propriety or right of allowing an extension of the privilege. The first application was made in August, 1373, and on the 11th September, 1374, he requested to be granted one year more. The bishop granted his second request, but duly fined him five marks (£3 6s. 8d.) for the concession.—(Not. Cest. Lib. V., fol. 30a.) Whether he resigned or held his office is unknown. Nothing more has been ascertained about him, except that he was alive in 1400.

The sports of the people were imperative, and it is questionable whether the natural love of field sports in Englishmen did not really originate with the compulsory sports of the middle ages. Cannon of a rude sort had been used in the late French wars, and if the introduction of such instruments of death caused a panic amongst military authorities, the only effect produced was an increased faith in the skilful use of the bow and arrow. The laws for practising archery, in order to ensure accuracy of aim, were made more stringent and severe. All the manly sports enacted by law were constantly practised on the school common in Wigan. Sunday afternoon was the time when practising was chiefly enforced. That afternoon, when the weather permitted, was always like a fair-day on the common. Games, sports, and compulsory athletics invariably gave place, in the twilight, to the more blithesome and welcome science and art of flirtation, which was by no means unknown to our revered ancestors. During the comparative peace before 1363 the

practice of archery had given place on the school common to throwing of stones—or putting the stone—wood and iron, handball, football, and stickplay, and to the fighting of dogs and cocks to such an extent that it had to be put down by proclamation, and give place, on every feast day, to the practice of archery by using bows and arrows, or cross-bows and belts, under the penalty of imprisonment.—(Rymer, vol. III., page 704-770). Besides these sports on the school common there were leaping, jumping, running, and, no doubt, bull-baiting and bear-baiting. The archers of the neighbourhood were famed in war and sport; knights, gentlemen, and yeomen of Wigan were distinguished for their hospitality. The dress of the ladies was simple and graceful—a loose gown, girdled round the waist, and surmounted by a veil hanging from over the head. Marriageable but unmarried ladies were distinguished by an additional robe over their gowns.

The great times of peaceful excitements at this period were the fairs held twice a year on the site of the present Market Place and sloping fields, on which the new Market Hall now stands. These fairs were on a very large scale, and were regulated by special laws. Tents were erected in rows, and the different articles for sale were displayed in appointed places, and the town and fair were entirely passed over to the rector for the time, the keys of the gates being ceremoniously handed over to him the night before by the mayor and burgesses, just as the keys of London were customarily handed to royalty in passing Temple Bar. The rector posted his toll-keepers at every gate where merchants had to pay the required rate. Old inhabitants may remember when this lingering custom was enforced at the toll near the London and North-Western Railway bridge. To these fairs merchants came from all parts of the country, like the travelling cheap-Jacks of the present day. Everything was brought that was likely to bring a price, whether for ornament or use. Showmen, too, formed a prominent part of the travelling town. The merchants in the town had to shut their shops and sell in the fair; if they did not, their goods otherwise offered for sale were forfeited to the lord of the manor. Often goods were brought to those fairs that local tradesmen had not in stock. Foreign merchants brought and sold the goods of other districts at great profit to themselves, and bought up local produce at the lowest price, in order to sell at other fairs, so that often there was a good exchange made, although more money was frequently taken out of the town than was left in it. In still later times cheap-Jacks, with Sheffield cutlery and Brummagem wares were there; cloth merchants, from Leeds and other towns, sold narrow for broad cloth, and unshrunk, for shrunk, goods; cheese from Cheshire, cakes from Eccles, and home-made gingerbread and home-brewed ale were to be had in many a booth. Lads treated their lasses to a pennyworth of sweets at the stalls. Singers, with stentorian voices, screamed their ballads to popular airs; reciters gesticulated at the rate of a

penny a stanza ; sleight-of-hand men were gazed at with open mouth ; there were shows with genial clowns that made the peasants laugh until their sides were sore. Trade, fun, frolic, and pickpockets all flourished at the fair.

These were the harvest-times for quacks. There are people at this day who idiotically believe that if they, their sons, or friends, become pupils of a famous school, they must necessarily become famous, as if teachers were brain manufacturers, instead of brain trainers, as they really are. So the appearance of the quacks' display of anatomical subjects and verbose oratory was a certain proof to the gullible crowds that they could cure all diseases incidental to humanity. Pills of common bread and phials of coloured water were sold by "philanthropists" at fabulous prices, and miracles performed on the spot on unknown accomplices to the wonderment of gaping gulled ones who immediately purchased the invaluable drugs, often with their last penny, to have them ready in no improbable emergency. Prevention was better than cure, and the possession of these quasi-drugs acted like a charm on the possessors as long as they were in good health.

Although the following is but a nursery rhyme, very like a parody in "Froggy would a wooing go," there is no doubt that much love-making went on in the market towns at fair times.

Little John Jiggy Jag,
He rode a penny nag,
And went to Wigan to wo-oo-oo.
When he came to a beck
He fell and broke his neck :
Johnny, now, how dost thou do-oo-oo ?

I made him a hat
Out of my coat-lap,
With stockings of pearly blue-ue-ue,
A hat and a feather,
To keep out the cold weather :
So Johnny, dear, how dost thou do-oo-oo ?

A volume could not contain a full description of all the quaint customs and manners of ancient Wigan. It may be interesting to hear all about the old local punishments, but no pleasure is more entertaining to old and young than the rehearsal of wedding customs, nuptial tales, love gossip, or the descriptive accounts of drinking bouts. Wigan was a comparatively small place at this period ; everybody knew everything about everybody. The inhabitants formed a sort of clan, and, although there were the inevitable internal disagreements, yet genuine brotherhood and real goodwill to all, as is generally the case in small communities, prevailed. Although marriages were common, each one was an event to be chronicled. Great interest was taken in the nuptials of the humblest couple in the town. When courtship begot

engagement and brought about the climax of matrimony, every inhabitant acted as if claiming some sympathetic connection with the ceremony. Marriage was the chief hope of the young, and the most marked event in the memory of the old, and even old maids, of nameless age, never entirely divorced their hopes from it. As the day of any local marriage approached etiquette and blank formality, the productions of higher civilisation, were discarded. The marriage of young couples was always treated as a laudable action and most commendable example, and the fact was not overlooked that the "settling down" in life of two poor persons was an expensive proceeding, especially in those days when money was scarce. The sympathy of the inhabitants took a practical form, without causing the assistance to look like a charity, and so avoiding offence to the proud young settlers, many of whom were poor on the morning of their marriage, and comparatively rich before the fashions of the day had passed away. The whole borough turned out to see the ceremony performed at the church door. After the couple came from the altar, where they received the holy sacrament immediately after the ceremony proper, the churchyard became a public playground. The bride and bridegroom did not hasten away from the hilarious throng to enjoy their honeymoon, but remained to be the centre of joy and to reap the harvest which the custom of the times presented to them. It was a day of hearty and pleasant labour and cheer for the proud pair, to whom presents were rarely formally presented. Music, dancing, and singing filled up the evening, and those amusements required the accompaniment of refreshments. A booth was especially erected in the churchyard, in which the bride presided and sold "bride-ale" at an exorbitant price to all consumers. The profits, which were sometimes great, were the bride's perquisites. Men and women considered it a pleasant duty to drink the health of the young couple. One good drink required another, and thus while heads grew light and hearts were merry the bride was reaping profits that were often sufficient to furnish her house. A drink of "bride-ale" was considered as lucky as a rub of the bridegroom's shoulder. Thus, moreover, the poorest man's marriage was made memorable. As rice was not then imported into the country, wheat was thrown at the couple on their return from church. The bride-cake, too, was an important item. It was sometimes broken in pieces over the bride's head, and then the pieces were distributed amongst the people, who each treasured the little bit and slept with it under the pillow, in the belief that in a dream the future partner would auspiciously appear. Sometimes, as a post-prandial ceremony, the newly-wed pair kissed each other publicly over the cake before it was broken, after which the cake was cut into small pieces, and each piece, before it was given away, passed superstitiously through the wedding-ring. After writing became more common, invitations to marriages were issued in the names of the about-to-be happy pair, and had generally an expressive postscript to the effect

that they "would be thankful for all favours conferred on them that day."

Many of the wealthy burgesses of Wigan were chapmen. All market-towns were the home-residence of such tradesmen. They are not distinguished anywhere in the recorded history of the town, but they were, nevertheless, a well-known and important class of inhabitants. They are frequently found as parties to, or witnesses of, deeds, wills, and indentures of no real interest to the reader. It is indeed chiefly from such documents that the staple trades of the town have been ascertained, and only people of social or monetary influence are directly connected with such concerns. These chapmen, or local travelling tradesmen, are to this day represented in Wigan by a worthy class of "Scotch drapers." Their articles of merchandise were only limited to the class of goods for which there was a demand. That is, they were prepared to supply the demands of every purchaser. They were the hawkers of the middle ages, and travelled to all country houses and villages with pack-horses, and, knowing exactly what the wants of the people were, never over-burdened their nags with useless wares, but provided themselves with the proper stocks at the Wigan Fair, in which they were well known as good, though hard, customers. Local chapmen purchased wholesale from the more princely chapmen who attended fairs only, and retailed their goods by a house-to-house visitation. Special clauses were inserted in the charters for the benefit of the wholesale or foreign merchants. Those retail hawkers were always welcome, chiefly because they were the vehicles of news and gossip. Their mercantile intelligence generally brought them comfortable pecuniary rewards, and their education was generally far above the average, for their signatures to documents are not attested by "their mark," but in their own handwriting.

Local trade was still in a prosperous state, but the commercial, rapid progress of the middle ages can scarcely be appreciated, or even recognised as progress, by those who take the advancements of the latter half of the nineteenth century as their standard of measurement. Progress in the present day is made with giant strides, but then it was as slow and imperceptible, although as sure, as vegetable growth. Tradesmen were considered to be doing well when their ample expenditure was less than their income. The weavers and leather merchants of Wigan, as well as the dyers, bleachers, and other tradesmen, were slowly and distinctly, yet most laudably, separating themselves from the lower classes in the town, or even from the social sphere of their own ancestors, by their superior tastes and aspirations after greater home comforts, as evidenced by their erection of superior houses, which were recorded by historians of two reigns afterwards as having been remarkable for being substantially built of wood or stone. Wigan, Lancaster, and Preston were particularly mentioned as being commendable for their good and comfortable houses, in which were the luxuries of glass windows, but rather draughty doors. Wigan

yeomen were considered to be well off with a living of five pounds a year, and a gentleman had quite an independent competency when possessed of an income of ten or twenty pounds, whilst a knight with one hundred and fifty pounds was little inferior to royalty itself.

Every great invention produces a new trade to supply its own demands or expands those already in existence. The introduction of weaving added to the websters of the town other tradesmen whose services were required to perfect the commodity for the market. The linen and cotton goods had to be bleached, and many of the neighbouring meadows were used for this purpose. Master dyers and calico printers were rich and influential burgesses. The numerous cattle reared in the neighbourhood were remarkable for the fine quality of their horns, and their skins made excellent leather; consequently horners, tanners, and leather merchants were numbered with the prosperous tradesmen. All these were employers of labour and occupiers of superior houses. The population could not have been far below 3,000, for even after the ensuing wars and civil disturbances, when the town deteriorated and many excellent houses fell into decay, it was still about 3,000.

In Sir Richard Steele's *Spinster* (1719) the new innovation was called by industrious spinsters "the tawdry, pie-spotted, flabby, ragged, low-priced thing called calico: a foreigner by birth: made the Lord knows where by a parcel of heathens and pagans that worship the devil and work for a halfpenny a day." The rock or distaff was sometimes put to a bad use.

"I bought my wife a stone of lint,
As good as e'er did grow:
And all that she has made of it
Is one poor pound of tow.
Quoth I: 'For shame, thou idle dame!
Go spin your top of tow.'
She took the rock, and with a knock
She broke it o'er my pow."

Even in the 19th century it is said that a salmon was caught in the Douglas. It was once an excellent trout and salmon river, from which the inhabitants derived the greater part of their fish supply; but it was enacted in 1389 that the rivers "in the county of Lancaster be put in defence, as to the taking of salmons, from Michaelmas Day to the Purification of Our Lady (2nd February), and in no other time of the year, because that salmons be not seasonable in the said waters in the time aforesaid, and in the parts where such rivers be there shall be assigned and sworn good and sufficient servators of this statute."

Nothing of the nature of a school in Wigan is known to have existed at this time, but the College of Wigan, mentioned long afterwards by Kuerdon, may not

improbably have entered into existence. There was the Collegiate School at Upholland, but whether Wigan derived any direct scholastic benefit from it is not known. The parish of Wigan, in common with other parishes, was ordered to pay, in 1371, 22s. 3d. as a subsidy to the King; but it was discovered that the parishes had been represented as five times greater in number than they really were, consequently the amount produced was far too small, and the tax on every parish was, therefore, raised to 116s., and that amount paid. The rector of the parish then was James de Langeton, who had been presented to the living by Ralph de Langeton, the patron in 1370.

In the second year of King Richard II. (1378) the previous charters were ratified and confirmed to James de Langeton, the parson of Wigan. The same liberties and powers were allowed to him and the burgesses whose predecessors and ancestors had reasonably used and enjoyed the liberties and quittances aforesaid "from the time of making the letters and charters aforesaid." The following is a copy of the original Latin, with the English translation:—

2do. RICHARDI II.

"Richardus Dei gratia Rex Angliæ et Franciæ et Dominus Hiberniæ Omnibus ad quos præsentæ Literæ pervenerint Salutem : Inspeximus Cartam Confirmationis Domini Edwardi nuper Regis Angliæ avi nostri in hæc Verba : (*reciting preceding charter.*) Nos autem Concessionem et Confirmationem prædictas ratas habentes et gratas eas pro nobis et Hæredibus nostris quantum in nobis est dilecto nostro Jacobo de Langton nunc Parsonæ dictæ Ecclesiæ de Wygan et Successoribus suis Parsonis ejusdem Ecclesiæ ac præfatis Burgensibus et Successoribus suis *concedimus et confirmamus* sicut Carta prædicta rationabiliter testatur et prout prædictus Jacobus et Prædecessores sui Parsonæ Ecclesiæ prædictæ ac Burgenses prædicti et eorum Antecessores Libertatibus et Quietantiis prædictis a tempore Confectionis Cartæ prædictæ huc usque usi sunt rationabiliter et gavisimè—In cujus Rei testimonium hæc literas nostras fieri fecimus patentes—Teste me ipso apud Gloucestriam secundo die Novembris Anno Regni nostri secundo."

2ND RICHARD II.

"Richard, by the grace of God King of England and France and Lord of Ireland. To all to whom the present Letters shall come. We have inspected the Charter of Confirmation of the Lord Edward, late King of England, our grandfather, in these words :—(*reciting preceding charter.*) And we, esteeming the grants and confirmations aforesaid authentic and agreeable, do grant and confirm them for us and our heirs as much as in us is unto our beloved James de Langeton, now the parson of the said church of Wygan, and his successors, parsons of the same church, and the aforesaid burgesses and their successors like as the charter aforesaid reasonably testifies, and as the aforesaid James and his predecessors, parsons of the church aforesaid, and the burgesses aforesaid and their antecessors have hitherto reasonably used and enjoyed the liberties and quittances aforesaid from the time of making the charter aforesaid : In testimony of which thing we have caused these our letters to be made patent. Witness myself at Gloucester, the 2nd day of November, in the second year of our reign."

CHAPTER X.

*Introduction of Machinery for making Hats—Preparations for last Feudal Struggle—
Lord Darnley—Bosworth Field—Richard's Banner hung in Wigan—The New
King—Dreadful Plague—Interesting Wigan Marriage—Bell, Book, and Candle—
The Mayor—Valor Ecclesiasticus—Lawsuit about the Advowson of the Church—
Decision of the Arbitrator—Another Rector—Grant of Land.*

THE borough now entered into a transition state. From a condition of prospective prosperity the unsettled nation caused in the ancient town that perturbation from which no man could say whether progression or retrogression would result. There was only the certainty of its being unable to stand still. It was an influential member of the body politic, and the whole body was convulsed with civil contention. There were indecision, division, and contention in the town. Some of the leaders were for one party, some for the other, and the conclusions they came to were the determinations of the followers. Each man despised his trade, and displayed his rose. Local history was swallowed up by stirring national events, consequently there is exceedingly little known of the history or condition of Wigan during the fifteenth century. Even few of the names of the sheriffs of the county are known; there were no members of Parliament returned for the borough, and rectors, as far as history relates, might not have existed. The long and glorious but disastrous war with France was still going on; wars on the borders and wars in Wales were constantly recurring. Few places are mentioned as worthy of notice that did not bring honours to one of the rival houses, and Wigan had no such special honour. It was the special scene of no civil strife. Every family in the county was represented on the field, victory was now on this side, now on that, and consequently the history of counties and towns was forgotten in the all-absorbing history of the country. Local families whose members had distinguished themselves in the civil strife are never mentioned. The history of the loyal borough during the Lancastrian and Yorkist rule is almost entirely a blank. Nevertheless, during this quiet locally unrecorded time Wigan must have been making comparatively great commercial progress, for at the beginning of the Tudor period it presented a

superior appearance in houses, comforts, and customs, and this in spite of the civil war opposition that threatened its very existence.

The introduction of machinery to the manufactures of Wigan has, until recently, when familiarity has begotten indifference, been looked upon with mixed feelings of admiration and determined opposition, giving rise to riots and rattening. Especially was this the case when mechanical inventions first usurped the place of manual labour. Among the ignorant the innovation produced a great scare, and at a superficial glance their reasons seem to be justifiable. One of the first recorded instances took place at this period of Wigan's history. Until nearly the end of the fifteenth century hats had always been hand-made. Thousands of poor people were employed in the business at their homes, but in 1482 mills were erected for that special manufacture. The operatives were alarmed, rose unanimously against the innovation, and petitioned Parliament to have it stopped, otherwise the operatives would be left without work, without food, and poverty would be the lot of the labourer. It was as in all other manufactures, one machine could be made to do the work of 20 men, and therefore, they believed, these 20 men would be thrown out of employment, forgetting the important fact that work would be done better and sold cheaper to consumers, as well as new artisans of a higher nature demanded for the making of the new machinery. Wigan, like Manchester and Bolton, shared in the scare. It was the belief of the people that every person should be protected by Act of Parliament, as the trades of towns were by the merchant guilds. The cheapness of merchandise to consumers was never considered, and the laws of supply and demand were unknown, and never believed to influence the wealth of both producer and consumer. The petition to Parliament for the protection of hat manufacturers was seriously discussed, and both labourer and manufacturer, according to the intellectual light of the time, were benefited by the interference of the Imperial Parliament.

Notwithstanding the civil strife and the fears entertained for the welfare of the old town at the beginning of the rising, Wigan continued to make satisfactory commercial progress, although it had sent large contingents to the rival parties. The last great struggle of Feudalism divided against itself was about to be made. Eleven fixed battles had not been sufficient to finally settle affairs. The last struggle of the Roses was about to be made. It was the eve of Bosworth Field. The country was in a most unsettled state. Many were in arms without actually knowing whither they were bound or on what side they were to fight, whether for the newly arrived Henry of Richmond or for the usurper, Richard III. Commercial men took as little active interest in the warfare as their independence made it possible, consequently trade prospered more than during any of the civil

wars. Nobles had been slain in the field or executed on the block, whilst the burgesses of towns were pushing their trades both in home and foreign markets, and so were gradually attaining a power and influence in the State that have never waned. Thus prosperity had grown and wealth accumulated in Wigan, and yet, on account of the raw levies drawn from the town, the population is more likely to have decreased than increased during the next century, at the end of which many houses were unoccupied, and many conspicuously good ones were allowed to fall into a dilapidated condition merely from disuse. In less than three-quarters of a century from the last of the wars of the Roses the population was ascertained to be two thousand six hundred, exactly one thousand less than that of Ormakirk. In preparation for the coming struggle Lord Strange had collected at Lathom House a force of 10,000 men. He was loyal to Richard, but because of his relationship to Henry all was doubt and conjecture as to what side he was preparing to espouse. Edward Plumpton, at Lathom, wrote:—"People in this country be so troubled in such commandment as they have in the King's name and otherwise, marvellously—the King ordering them one way, lords and landlords in the rebel interest ordering them another—that they know not what to do. My lord Strange goeth forth from Lathom upon Monday next with 10,000 men, whither we cannot say. The Duke of Buckingham has so many as that it is said here that he is able to go where he will; but I trust he shall be right withstood, and—or—else were great pity."

Many of Derby's followers were Wigan men. For a fixed time every day a body of the distinguished Lancashire archers practised at the butts on Wigan school common and meadows. Who was rector or mayor is alike unknown. The people were led by the nobles from the mere belief of feudal duty. The barons were enraged at the usurpation and conduct of Richard, and kept alive the factious flame. Edward V. was but a lad when his father died, and was never crowned, although declared king. The "crook-backed" Richard deceived his faithful nobles, courted the favour of the people after the manner of usurpers, killed the prince, and seized the throne. The die was cast, the diabolical deed irretrievably done, and the whole country murmured and rose in arms. Lord Stanley was the most distinguished and powerful of the king's followers. He had married Margaret, the mother of Henry Earl of Richmond, who by the results of Bosworth battle became Henry VII. His first wife had been the niece of the great Earl of Warwick, "the king maker." He had been imprisoned by Richard III. for his loyalty to Edward V., but was afterwards released and made Lord Steward of the king's household. He, with his son, Lord Strange, had been Justice of Chester in the reign of Edward IV., and again until the first year of Henry VII.

The murders, marriages, and deep designs of the crafty Richard did not bring

him all the peace and honour he had expected. All seemed to go well at first, when he lavishly and expensively tried to please the people, but he could not continue for a whole lifetime to bribe them to favour him. The inevitable reaction came with rebellion and revolution, and, as usual, the divided nation met on the battle-field to decide and settle their grievances. A gallant army marched under Richard and Lord Stanley to meet the opposing forces of Henry, who had hitherto been in exile. By the fortuitous circumstances of war Lord Strange, son of Stanley, had been captured, and was a prisoner in the camp of Henry, who threatened to behead him at once if Stanley, his stepfather, remained his foe. The battle commenced. Mounted on a good charger, the king, wearing his crown, determined to conquer or die; but he was horrified to see his men in large numbers pass over to the enemy without attempting to receive the charge of the first onset. Still he determined to try, for he had grown furious in despair. The order was given to attack, when Lord Stanley, as if aiding the furies to goad the king to madness, deserted to Henry with three thousand men, and became the king's most furious antagonist. In mad despair Richard galloped into the very thick of the battle, calling "Treason! Treason!" He was slain, the victory won, and the renegade Stanley crowned Henry on the field.

In the fatal affray that ensued Stanley captured the king's banner, and brought it away with him to Wigan. The incident is celebrated in the old doggerel rhyme.

"Jack of Wigan he did take
The Duke of Gloucester's banner,
And hung it up in Wigan Church,
A monument of honour."

For his services that day the estates of the Pilkingtons and the Harringtons in Lancashire were given to Stanley, and he was created the first Lord Derby.

The proud Henry had been established on the throne by being compelled, against his wish, but in order to please his subjects, to marry Elizabeth, the representative of the house of York, and the true lineal heiress of the throne. The Simnell conspiracy had failed, and the puppet prince was a menial in the royal kitchen; there was a lull after the long disturbance, and the king devoted himself to affairs of home administration in a heartless, selfish, greedy, and subtle manner. Acts were passed to diminish the power of the nobles who had helped him: benevolences were levied, and the civil and criminal code of laws remodelled. To be rich and secure on his throne were the objects of his life. He seemed as anxious to hoard up wealth as nineteenth century manufacturers of fortune, whose chief ambition would appear to be to accumulate colossal riches. Ambitious aspirants vow eternal friendship to their devoted adherents, and make solemn pledges that weigh but little with their judgments and actions when success has crowned their hopes. The first Tudor, raised to the throne by the timely and

effective assistance of Lord Stanley, who was created Earl Derby after the success at Bosworth, was a selfish, money-grasping miser, whose memory of former help failed him when convenient. He overlooked the obligations by which he was bound to the Stanleys when his throne was secured, and for a trivial treason sent Sir William Stanley, the brother of his benefactor, to the block, as if chiefly that his greed might gloat over the nobleman's great wealth, which he confiscated.

Another dreadful plague, called the "Sweating Sickness," was carrying off thousands of the inhabitants during the autumn of the year 1484. Those who could afford it fled from the towns as from an enemy unseen except in its destructive consequences; and Stanley himself was said to be afflicted by it. It was as fatal as the Asiatic Cholera, affecting and cutting down on the same day. Wigan is not specially mentioned, but, in all likelihood, it had its share of that suffering which prevailed in the locality.

There was in 1458 a very interesting Wigan marriage arrangement between Thomas, son of Lawrence, of Tyldesley, and John Birkenhead, of Wigan. The agreement was drawn up, as was the custom of the time, after the same fashion as trade indentures, showing that people of property then, as now, believed matrimonial transactions were somewhat similar to, although more jubilant than, commercial ones. The above-named Thomas was the father of the bride, and John was the proposer for the hand of his fair daughter, Janet. Everything was settled but the dowry. The agreement was written on parchment, and sealed with the family seal, that Thomas was to pay John £20 by instalments as dowry of the heiress Janet. On the day of espousal ten marks were paid, then five marks at the feast of Easter, six marks at the feast of Saint Michael the Archangel, and so on, until the whole of the £20 was paid up. But this was not all, for "messuages, tenements, reversions, rents, and pence, with the appurtenances," to the yearly value of sixteen shillings and fourpence were also bestowed. John was "sworn upon the Holy Evangelist, and also bound in sufficient surety of £40 . . . and Thomas also was sworn on the Holy Evangelist and bound by the same surety of £40." According to usage, this impressive ceremony took place at the church door, the recognised and legal place for assigning dowers. Solemn contracts were thus publicly proclaimed almost on the very ground on which cattle were bought and sold at the fairs. Market and marriageable transactions in many of their phases strongly resembled each other, and provided subject-matter for books of philosophy or satire.

There can be no such thing as an Atheist, except in theory. Civilised or savage men may say there is no God, yet every man feels there is. To be a Unitarian is another matter altogether. In all countries and ages there have been religions, and always will be, whether true or false. It is inhuman and unnatural

to have no religion, but the religion of many is merely a superstitious belief, which is credited simply because the believer has been taught that creed from youth. The creed is not always adopted after reasonable consideration. Religions in all ages have been modified by the customs and manners of the times, and it is too often the case that a national creed is altered to suit the tastes of the age; indeed religious, and social fashions are alike variable, but whether they ought to be is no business of the historian. Religious works of the middle ages were more the results of superstition than of true faith, but superstition certainly strengthens faith. The power accredited to the Popish priests of the middle ages seems fabulous to the modern Christian, and the strides in religious belief and reform are as great as those of civilisation. To take an incident prevalent up to the end of the 15th century of the now supposed absurdity of beliefs to the parson and people, let us consider cursing by bell, book, and candle, so beautifully and accurately portrayed and caricatured in Mr. Barham's "Cardinal of Rheims."

Such excommunicatory cursing was read and solemnly believed in in all churches four times a year, viz., on Advent Sunday, the first Sunday in Lent, the Sunday in the Feast of Trinity, and the Sunday within the octave in Lent, after a solemn procession of priests and friars, bearing in front the symbolic three wax tapers, lighted, whilst the believing parishioners are eagerly anxious to see something awful. A priest, all in white, solemnly mounts the pulpit, and in woeful tones that thrill the superstitious audience looking for the immediate judgments of wrathful vengeance justly deserved, reads the denunciation, after calling upon saints, angels, martyrs, and virgins, and curses those who have neglected to give alms and those specially named as guilty of moral or social sin. At the end of the awful denunciation, amidst melancholy silence, he suddenly closes the book, blows out the candles, and orders the bell to be tolled. With these ceremonies everlasting damnation is supposed to seal the guilty.

" But what gave rise
To no little surprise,
Nobody seemed one penny the worse !"

No special case is mentioned as having taken place in Wigan, but it was a usual custom in all churches, and one definitely authenticated case happened in Leigh Church, 4th December, 1474.

The mayoralty of any English town is now-a-days a very expensive honour, and, at this early period distinguished for the scarcity of money, it is no surprise to find that the chief magistrate was not what is now called mayor. In order to be a popular and successful mayor one must, as a *sine qua non*, have money (even if no brains, although that by reason of the keen competition is an improbability, if

not an impossibility), and be willing to part with it. He is supposed to stimulate local trade, give a new impetus to a healthy circulation of money, and be himself a living example of benevolence. Wise philosophers would soon be forgotten as mayors; philanthropists might win the affection of their contemporaries, but men of wealth, tact, liberality, and experience carve their names on the lasting improvements of their boroughs. The name mayor, or any equivalent for it, nowhere appears in any of the first six royal charters which were all directly given to the rectors, as lords of the manor. From amongst the burgesses, however, officers were chosen as representatives of the town, and, like members of Parliament, were paid for their services. This paid municipal body consisted of the Chief Seneschal, Bailiff, and sub-Seneschal, or Clerk of the Court, whose fixed salaries were deducted from the rector's income, which was derived from the whole parish. At the end of the fifteenth century the rector, after paying all charities and compulsory charges, had an income of £72 12s. per annum. In 1539 the Chief Seneschal, Robert Langeton, and Bailiff, Robert Hatton, each received a salary of £4 per annum, whilst the sub-Seneschal, or Clerk, only received £1 6s. 8d.

Previous to 1534 tithes or tenths of ecclesiastical incomes, were paid to the Popes, but in that year a special Act of Parliament was passed to transfer these to Henry VIII., the original F.D. (Defender of the Faith). Every living in the country was valued by order of the king, and deductions and claims ascertained. From this valuation, or "*Valor Ecclesiasticus*," the exact income attached to the Rectory of Wigan is known. The entire income was £110 16s. 8d., from which were deducted, as fees and pensions, £30 13s. 4d.; the tithe or tenth of which, £8 1s. 4d., went to the royal exchequer.

"The Rectory of Wygan; in the hands of Richard Kyghley. It is worth, in rents and farms, as well of free tenants, as tenants at will in Wigan aforesaid, £25 per annum; also the rent of two water mills there, £3 6s. 8d. per annum; in corn tithes there, £56 13s. 4d. per annum; in hay tithes there, 13s. 4d. per annum; tithes of lambs, wool, calves, and flax, annually estimated at £3 16s. 8d.; oblations, with other small tithes and *rotulis* £18 per annum; perquisites, - together with market tolls, estimated in common years at £3 6s. 8d. per annum; total value, £110 16s. 8d. From thence there have to be deducted the fee of Robert Langeton, Chief Seneschal of Wygan, £4 per annum; also the fee of Robert Hatton, Bailiff of Wygan, £4 per annum; also the fee of William Walton, sub-Seneschal and Clerk of the Court, £1 6s. 8d. per annum; also the annual pension due to the Cathedral Church of Lichfield, in the county of Stafford, £20; also pence annually due to the Archdeacon of Chester for synodals and procurations, 16s. 8d.; total amount of deductions, £30 3s. 4d.; and there remains thereon a clear £80 13s. 4d. The tithe thereof is £8 1s. 4d."

The following historical notice of the Parish Church is taken from the Harl. M.S., 473:—"Mr. William Stokes (about 1551) told me that at Wigan, in Lancashire, the church thereof was of three sundry buildings and repairings; as was to him by ancient men proved, who had seen, in the last repairing thereof, fragments of idols, some of the Roman features, and symmetry some of the Saxons, &c."

The following account of Wigan at this period occurs in the Itinerary of Leyland (vol. VII., fo. 56, p. 45):—"Wigan, pavid, as higge as Warington, and better builded; there is one Paroch Church amidde the Towne, summe Marchauntes, sum Artificers, sum Fermers. Mr. Bradshaw hath a place caullid Hawe a Mile from Wigan. He had found mock canal like Se Coole in his Ground very profitable to him and Gerade, of Ynse, dwellith in that parish. The great Myne, of Canale, is at Hawe, 2 miles from Wigan. One Bradshaw dwellith at Hawe."

There were frequent law-suits about the advowson of the Wigan Parish Church. Families and their interests had become so mixed that direct inheritances for the want of legal proof were no easy matters to unravel. At happy matrimonial unions every one, in the best of humours, is anxious to do everything for the happy pair, who might for the time be owners of all they survey; but after generations look more callously, or, at least, indifferently, on these natural and every day ceremonies, and, laying aside all conventional feelings of sympathy, enquire in a business-like spirit whether the matter of fact man of law had been employed in the auspicious event to make legal tenders of estates, to which, if not, they themselves are entitled to look upon as inheritances. In the 15th century the advowson of the Parish Church was claimed by the Standish family, as well as by Sir Ralph de Langeton; but the Standishes claimed it as an appurtenant chapel of Standish Church, whereas the Langetons maintained that it had been a family living of theirs from time immemorial, and, moreover, that it was an independent parish. The Standishes never had presented any person to the living, whereas the Langetons had for at least a hundred years. The only agreement the parties could come to was that they should arbitrate, and meanwhile bind themselves in heavy amounts to abide by the awards of the arbitrators. To this end, and pending the settlement of the dispute, a bond was entered into by both parties for 1,000 marks in 1414-15. Fourteen years after, the dispute being still unsettled, the bond was made to the extraordinary amount of £1,000. In 1430 both sides agreed to refer to one more arbitrator and abide by the decision. Alice, daughter of Gilbert de Standish, and sister of Lawrence de Standish, claimant to the advowson, was chosen arbitrator. She was the wife of Thomas Gerard, of Bryn, knight. It would be a remarkable thing if a woman should decide such a legal matter without being prejudiced in favour of her own family, but both sides seemed to have the utmost confidence in

her, and her enquiries, researches, and judgment proved her worthy of trust. She did her work with a resolute spirit of honest enquiry. Spiritual and temporal advisers were called to her aid. Records, even then ancient, were turned out of their musty boxes to give evidence. Wigan vacancies, as far as known, were inquired into, and deeds recording the presentations were consulted. Alice came to the conclusion that the Langetons had presented from time immemorial, and that her relatives, the Standishes, had no right or title to the advowson nor to any part of it. Her judgment reads like the summing-up of a very learned Portia, skilled not only in the intricacies of law, but in the subtleties of human nature. The living witnesses of her own family and their determined claims were not evidence sufficient for her against the written and duly signed and sealed records brought from old chests in the Wigan Parsonage or Hall. If her friends still maintained their right, she asked them to bring forward evidence of weight, and she would gladly hear it. "Let Lawrence," she says, "take out his writ of right, and before the Justices of Lancaster show his title, and have his champion ready."

Claims for land could either be settled by duel or at the grand assize. At the first trial both parties had to be present in court, the claimants had to make a formal demand, and the defendant could either settle the dispute by combat or by referring the charge to the king's assize. It was not necessary for the defendants to take a personal part in the duel, but if his hired champion were defeated, the result was a final settlement of all claim. It was open to the claimant to object to the champion, but he had to prove his objection or meet him in the list. Assize simply means statute, or Act of Parliament. The law for holding assize courts was passed in the reign Henry II., solely for trying titles to property.

The arbitratix also showed that testimonies of great antiquity proved that Wigan was a parish church, and not a chapel. She finishes her judgment thus:—"And also that both the said parties shall be sworn on a book before me, the aforesaid Alice, in the presence of Sir Philip Boteler, Sir Richard Houghton, and Henry de Byghley, truly and faithfully to hold this award in all points according to the true intent thereof. And if any altercation, case or variance, fall of matter of any circumstance or dependence thereof amongst the said parties shall be ruled by me, the said Alice, and my counsel therein unto the time that this matter be at effectual end, so that I, the said Alice, make end of this matter between the said parties before the feast of S. Michael next coming."—(1430). Constance, the daughter of this Alice, was afterwards married to her cousin, Lawrence de Standish. By the above decision of Alice 40s. a year was to be paid out of Langeton's Wigan estates to Standish, by a statute passed in the time of Edward I., by which lands could be charged for

debts. This debt of 40s. was not paid, and Alexander "seized on the obligation of statute merchant, and took out letters of administration in the name of Oliver de Standish, an infant, his son, and in the name of John Dale, a poor labourer, to administer the goods of the said Lawrence, his father."

Another short document of 1441 reveals one more link of the broken chain of rectors of Wigan. It is recited in this parchment that the parson of Wigan, James Langeton, had a commercial dispute, which was referred to arbitration, and the disputing parties, Langeton, Orle, and Hindley, were bound in an arbitration bond of £1,000 to abide the award of the arbitrators, Workesley, Scarisbrick, and Rigby. James Langeton may, therefore, reasonably be considered to have been Rector of Wigan in the 20th Henry VI.

In 5th Henry VII. (1489-90) a grant of land in Wigan and Winstanley was made by Edward Winstanley to Sir Alexander Standish, knight.

Copies of the fifth and sixth royal charters to Wigan, the repeated portions being deleted, are here given for the perusal of the reader. Besides these there are four more charters received in the times of Elizabeth, Charles II., James II., and William IV.

1mo. HENRICI IV.

"Henricus Dei gratia Rex Angliæ et Franciæ et Dominus Hiberniæ Omnibus ad quos præsentēs Literæ pervenerint Salutem: Inspeximus Literas Patentes Domini Ricardi nuper Regis Angliæ Secundi post Conquestum factas in hæc Verba:—(*Cartam præcedentem, recitantes.*) Nos autem concessiones et confirmationes prædictas ratas habentes et gratas eas pro nobis et Hæredibus nostris quantum in nobis est acceptamus approbamus ac præfatis Jacobo nunc Parsonæ Ecclesiæ prædictæ et Successoribus suis prædictis necnon præfatis Burgensibus et Successoribus suis *concedimus et confirmamus* sicut Literæ et Cartæ prædictæ rationabiliter testantur et prout idem Jacobus et Prædecessores sui Parsonæ Ecclesiæ prædictæ ac dicti Burgenses et Antecessores sui Libertatibus et Quietantiis a tempore Confectionis Literarum et Cartarum prædictarum rationabiliter usi sunt et gavis. In cujus Rei testimonium has Literas nostras fieri fecimus patentes. Teste meipso apud Westmonasterium decimo die Maii Anno Regni nostri primo.—WAKERYNG.

Examinatæ per J. Wakeryng et Willhelmu Mirfeld, *Clericos.*"

1st HENRY IV.

"Henry, by the grace of God, King of England and France and Lord of Ireland. To all to whom these present Letters shall come greeting: We have inspected the letters patent of the Lord Richard, late King of England, the second after the Conquest, made in these words:—(*reciting preceding charter.*) And we, esteeming the grants and confirmations aforesaid authentic, do accept and approve and do grant and confirm them for us and our heirs, as much as in us is, to the aforesaid James, now parson of the church aforesaid, and his successors aforesaid, like as the letters and charters aforesaid reasonably testify, and as the same James and his predecessors, parsons of the church aforesaid, and the aforesaid burgesses and their ancestors have reasonably used and enjoyed the liberties and quittances aforesaid from the time of making the letters and charters aforesaid. In testimony of which thing we have caused these our letters to be made patent. Witness myself at Westminster, the 10th day of May, in the 1st year of our reign.—WAKERYNG.

16 Marks paid in the Hanaper.

Examined by John Wakeryng and William Mirfeld, *Clerks.*"

1mo. HENRICI V.

"Henricus Dei gratia Rex Angliæ et Franciæ et Dominus Hiberniæ Omnibus ad quos presentes Literæ pervenerint Salutem: Inspeximus Literas Patentes carissimi Domini et Patris nostri Henrici nuper Angliæ Regis Quarti factas in hæc Verba: Henricus Dei gratia, &c. (*Cartam præcedentem Henrici 4ti. verbatim, ab initio ad finem, recitantes; quæ Carta quidem eas Richardi 2; Edwardi 3; Edwardi 2, et Henrici 3 etiam recitat*). Nos autem concessionem et confirmationem prædictas ratas habentes et gratas eas pro nobis et Hæredibus nostris, quantum in nobis est, acceptamus approbamus ac præfatis nunc Parsonæ Ecclesiæ prædictæ et Successoribus suis *concedimus et confirmamus* sicut Literæ et Cartæ prædictæ rationabiliter testantur et prout idem et Prædecessores sui, Parsonæ Ecclesiæ prædictæ, ac dicti Burgenses et Antecessores sui Libertatibus et Quietantiis a tempore confectionis Literarum et Cartarum prædictarum rationabiliter usi sunt et gavisi. In cujus Rei testimonium has Literas nostras fieri fecimus patentes.—Teste meipso apud Westmonasterium die Anno Regni nostri primo."

1st HENRY V.

"Henry, by the grace of God, King of England and France and Lord of Ireland. To all to whom these present Letters shall come greeting: We have inspected the letters patent of the very dear Lord and our Father, Henry the Fourth, late King of England, done in these words: Henry, by the grace of God, &c. (*reciting the preceding charter of Henry 4th, word for word, from the beginning to the end; which same charter recites also those of Richard 2; Edward 3; Edward 2, and Henry 3*). And we, holding the grants and confirmations aforesaid ratified, do accept and approve and do grant and confirm them for us and our heirs, as much as in us is, to the aforesaid now parson of the church aforesaid and his successors, like as the letters and charters aforesaid reasonably testify, and as the same and his predecessors, parsons of the church aforesaid, and the aforesaid burgesses and their ancestors have reasonably used and enjoyed the liberties and quittances aforesaid from the time of making the letters and charters aforesaid. In testimony of which thing we have caused these our letters to be made patent. Witness myself at Westminster, the day of in the 1st year of our reign."

CHAPTER XI.

Dr. Lynacre—Dr. Wyott—Wages and Prices—Earl of Balcarres—Monasteries—The Marklands of Wigan—Catholicism in Mary's Reign—Rectors—Wynwick Chantry—Funeral Customs—M.P.'s—Parish Church—Cotton Law.

IN all ages there have been great men who, like terrestrial luminaries, are justly admired as extraordinary examples to their fellow-creatures. Sometimes it is but a special quality in one that is admired, and sometimes the whole genial intellect, or exemplary morality. Wigan, too, can lay claim to one, not a native but a sojourner, whose name should never be omitted from the list of examples in unflagging perseverance, scholarship, scientific research, and hard-earned honour. Honours were by no means more easy of attainment in the sixteenth century than in the nineteenth, and he that works, hoping only for honour, seldom succeeds, for lasting glory has generally been the result of brilliant deeds of duty. The new rector, Thomas Lynacre, presented by the patron, Ralph Langeton, to the living on October 10th, 1519, is the oldest known physician in Wigan, although it is not known whether he practised gratuitously or otherwise as a physician in his parish, but, as he had been trained to that high profession and was a lover of the work, the likelihood is that his abilities and acquirements were not allowed to lie dormant in such an extensive field. His character, human sympathy, and love of science exclude all ideas of indolence, negligence, and inaction. Though educated far above the average English gentleman of this day, and laden with honours before he came to Wigan, he went about doing good according to his genial and lofty ideas of Christianity. As an example to old and young Wigan has had no nobler citizen. Although pecuniarily assisted by his parents, he fought the battle of life by himself, reaped the rewards, and, by his far-seeing intelligence, founded an institution which to this day is one of the most praiseworthy societies of our island. As a student he had no equal in painstaking assiduity, and as a scholar he earned for himself the unique reputation of being the first Englishman who read Aristotle and Galen in the original Greek. He was not all selfish conceit, crediting no one's good efforts, except when he himself had a share of the profitable claims, disparaging

and discountenancing, like little-minded men, but he rather encouraged good intentions and well-directed, even if feeble, efforts: not grumblingly desiring others to share and to bear his responsibilities; not labouring under the impression that all men were born to help him, whilst he should scorn others who asked simply for the advice of experienced men. It was purely by his own genuine ability and unflagging perseverance that he rose to honour and distinction.

He, although of a Derbyshire family, was born at Canterbury, and educated there under the celebrated schoolmaster, William Tilly, who was afterwards the ambassador of Henry VII. to the Court of Rome. He was a youth of promising ability, at Oxford a distinguished student, and was chosen a fellow of his college (All Saints) in 1484. Whilst in residence there he continued to be an ardent and successful student, but the knowledge he acquired only stimulated in him the desire to know more, so he determined to study at the best schools on the Continent. He travelled into Italy for purposes of self-improvement, mixed with learned members of society, and was generally well received. He studied under the best masters, Demetrius and Politian, at Rome and Florence, and took his degree of M.D. at Padua, which had then a school celebrated in medicine. Having returned to this country and his *alma mater* with his Italian laurels, he was incorporated doctor of physic at Oxford, after which he read his *shagling* lecture. A shagling lecture was an extraordinary, or temporary, one "allowed either by public authority, common consent, or recommendation." He afterwards became a distinguished tutor, physician, divine, and author, of the highest authority and honour. He was tutor to Prince Arthur and the Princess Katherine, and afterwards physician to Henry VII. and Henry VIII., and was the first President of the College of Physicians. To this society he gave his house in Knight-riding Street, London, and there their meetings were held until the beginning of the sixteenth century. Having attained honour and wealth in the scholastic and medical professions, he took holy orders, and was admitted chanter of the church of York in 1519, which post he resigned in November of the same year. At the same time Dr. Wiott, Wiote, or Wyat, Rector of Wigan, resigned his living there, and Dr. Lynacre was appointed his successor, whilst Dr. Wyat immediately entered on his duties as chanter of York on the 13th November, and thus a "fair" exchange was made; the Rector of Wigan became Chanter of York, and Dr. Lynacre, Chanter of York, became Rector of Wigan. Wyat was a doctor of divinity, and Lynacre a doctor of medicine, and in Wigan, no doubt, his medical skill did not altogether give place to his knowledge of divinity. He was always held in high esteem by his former pupil, Sir Thomas More, as well as by Erasmus, Latimer, Tonstall, and others of note, and his university was proud of him. He died in 1524, regretted by all, and was buried in St. Paul's Cathedral,

London, where a monument, well executed, was raised to his memory by his faithful friend and admirer, Dr. Clay. On his monument was written the following epitaph:—"He was a most skilful critic in the Greek and Latin, and an excellent physician besides (being physician to King Henry VIII.), who in his generation did many miraculous cures, and restored several to life when help was past, and even at the very point of death. He translated Galen's works out of Greek into Latin with singular perspicuity and clearness. He also completed a most excellent piece for the rectifying of the frame and module of the Latin tongue. He gave two lectures to the University of Oxon and one to Cambridge. He was a perfect hater of all indirect or fraudulent dealings, being sincerely faithful to his friends, and well beloved of all ranks and degrees of men."—(*Athenae Oxonienses*, vol. I, col. 43). He wrote many books, held many livings, and was succeeded in Wigan by Richard Langeton.

Like all rude and illiterate people, the Wiganers devoted much of their spare time to boisterous revelry and the sports of the day. Wages and market prices were both low, although the latter were relatively dearer than now; a day labourer's wages were 3d. a day, and his favourite ale 2d. a gallon. Wheat was 11s. 3d. a quarter, a good horse £2 4s., a cow 15s. 6d., a fat sheep or hog 5s., a calf 4s. 1d., a cock 3d., and a hen 2d. In 1564 the price of ale was raised to 4d. a gallon if consumed on the premises, and 6d. if carried away. The publicans were compelled to hang out their sign board when they had a supply, and to take it in when the brew was consumed, under a penalty of 6s. 8d., the present amount of an attorney's fee. In 1573 drunkards were imprisoned all night and fined 6d. in the morning, which, if they were unable to pay, the publican who supplied the liquor had to pay, or be imprisoned and lose his licence, a wise plan, impracticable in the present day.

Mr. Froude writes:—"By the third of sixth Henry the Eighth it was enacted that master carpenters, masons, bricklayers, tylers, plumbers, glaziers, joiners, and other employers of such skilled workmen should give to each of their journeymen, if no meat or drink was allowed, sixpence a day for the half-year, and fivepence a day for the other half, or fivepence-halfpenny for the yearly average. The common labourers fourpence a day for the half-year; for the remaining half threepence. In the harvest months they were allowed to work by the piece, and might earn considerably more; so that in fact (and this was the rate at which the wages were usually estimated), the day labourer, if in full employment, received on an average fourpence a day for the whole year." Comparing this with wages of the present day, and allowing for the difference of value in money, a labourer's wages would be equal to one pound a week.

Free trade was mercantile madness in the opinion of the Wiganers of the sixteenth century. The science of political economy had not yet emerged from chaos. Then money, hard cash, was considered wealth, and not, as now, the representative of wealth. The Wigan fair was always a very large one, and a great deal of business was always done at it. Foreign traders filled the booths with their stocks, sold cheaply for ready cash, and supplied all the wants of customers at lower prices than those of local tradesmen who, consequently, had no customers. They never considered that opposition is the life of trade, or that markets are established for consumers, not for sellers or manufacturers merely. It was an axiom with the tradesmen that it was the duty of consumers to buy only from local tradesmen, even if their prices were much higher than those of "foreigners." The consumers would not see it, local tradesmen would not lower their prices, and consequently the foreigners carried away the money, but left the consumers supplied. They did not openly object to the carrying off of the cash upon selfish views, for they could not thus have raised the sympathies of their townsmen, but they represented that without protection the town would be drained of every coin. The reasons seemed plausible, yet the consumers could not help seeing that they had obtained good equivalents for their money, and, moreover, had made a money profit by selling to foreign traders their own productions. Local protection was good and reasonable they said, but still they purchased from the foreigners. By the charter the "foreigner" traders were protected, and no prohibition could legally keep them out of the market as long as they paid their tolls and dues. The tradesmen appealed to local men of influence, and club-law was resorted to. At the next fair (1534) Sir Thomas Langeton, William Gerard, Esq., and John Byrshell, with a large following of riotous friends, swooped down, like birds of prey, upon the booths of chapmen and foreign traders, overturned their tables, destroyed their booths, and drove them from the Market Place. As in duty bound, the Chief Seneschal, or Mayor, commenced an action at law against the offenders, which was tried at the Assize at Lancaster, resulting in a verdict against the law breakers.—(Duchy Records, vol. XIV., Pleas W., n. 2).

At the disastrous battle of Flodden Field one of the most distinguished and successful generals was Sir Edward Stanley, who, at a moment when the day seemed favourable to the Scots, attacked, turned, and routed the enemy's flank, after killing John Lindsay, fifth Earl of Balcarres. For his gallant bearing and great and timely success on that day Stanley was created first Lord Monteagle.

An original document of a grant by deed of land and burgages in Wigan and Hindley in 1525 from James Dyke, of Wigan, to Rauff Standish, Esq., is in the possession of Mr. Peeke, London. The name Dyke does not anywhere occur in the annals of Wigan.

Monasteries were the most useful and charitable institutions of the country at one period of their history. They were the seats of learning, science, and art. The arts practised by the monks were, unfortunately, used to deceive the people, for, as the priories and monasteries grew in power, they grew in abuse. They were but minor types of the great licentious papal court of Rome, where all manner of evil and immorality was practised. Whilst at many of these wealthy institutions the monks doled out scanty charities to the poor, and took the benighted wayfarer in, they daily committed ecclesiastical robberies on the deluded rich or well-to-do. Pilgrims flocked to their shrines, and were deceived into giving all they had for absolution from sin. Figures were artfully designed to act, like a marionette, before the amazed penitent. Machinery was placed within the figures of sacred saints, by which they were made to kneel and nod or supplicatingly pray; tears trickled down the cheeks of saints as they seemed to pray for rich sinners; sham miracles were wrought before the penitent until every penny came out of his pocket. The inmates were men of God in the opinion of the poor and superstitious, but when they were left alone revelry and licentious immorality frequently filled up their time. Such was the disgraceful state of monastic life at the beginning of the Tudor period, when men's eyes were being opened by reformers to the delusions. Some were comparatively pure, but merely to be so was to be bad. Twenty-eight mitred abbots had seats in the House of Peers. Their enormous revenues were great incentives to their suppression, yet, as ignorant people still believed in them, it was necessary to persuade the nation at large of their evil power. The feeling against them spread with the enlightenment of the age, like fire in combustible matter, and everyone was mad for revenge for the deceits that had been practised upon them. As no rule can govern a panic-stricken people, or national rage, so all England, with one mad will, determined on the destruction of everything connected with monastic life. Their cry for destruction was insatiable, and over the whole length and breadth of the land the united rabble, irrespective of noble and artistic architecture, levelled monastic edifices and destroyed everything that had the semblance of an image. Whether the Wigan College fell in the general havoc I am unable to find, but Upholland Priory fell a prey to the ruinous crase, and the Parish Church of Wigan is supposed to have been ransacked and burned. The Priory had been built and endowed by Sir Robert de Holland in 1295, being the year in which Wigan first returned members of Parliament. It was afterwards changed into a Priory of Benedictine Monks by Walter de Langeton, Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield. The ancient church still stands beside the ruins of former greatness, and consists of tower, nave, aisles, and chancel. The windows contain a rich profusion of stained glass.

The Marklands settled in Wigan in 1539 (29th Henry VIII.), and became

prosperous and distinguished as tradesmen and citizens. Their house was a "fair hall," at that end of the Hallgate nearest the church, now called Bishopgate. This house afterwards became a specially historical one in connection with the last efforts of the Jacobites to regain the sovereignty of England for the Stuarts. Seven members of the family were mayors of the town, and one, Raufe Markland, of the Meadows, was member of Parliament for the borough in 1669, and the last who received parliamentary wages. Matthew Markland was mayor in 1664, and in 1665 Oliver Markland devised certain of his estates for the use of the poor of Wigan. These estates were sold for £25 in 1706.

In the second year of the reign of the Papal Mary, Richard Gerard, on the death of Richard Smyth, the incumbent, was presented to the living at Wigan by Edward, Earl of Derby. He died, after holding the office for four years, but they were perhaps the most memorable four years of England's history. It was providential that the ill-tempered, sour, jealous, bigoted, and infatuated Mary had but a short reign. During her time statesmen of the highest integrity and ability were beheaded on the block, and religious martyrs, the pride of England and the glory of their church, men of the most earnest zeal and steadfast faith, were burned at the stake because their creed was not her creed. Then Rogers, Ridley, Latimer, Cranmer, and 284 men, women, and children were burned in different parts of the country for their Protestantism, and thousands were tortured with sufferings worse than a hasty death. The blazing fagots were beacons that flashed throughout the land the intelligence of the martyrs' heroic sufferings and strengthened the faith they meant to destroy. Although Wigan was not a stronghold of papacy, the majority of the best local families were Roman Catholics; but they seem not to have been affected by the fanaticism of the age, and yet their leniency was forgotten in the reaction of Reformation enthusiasm when Vandalism was all the rage.

Langeton, Kyghley, Herbert, Smyth, and Gerard were the consecutive successors of Dr. Lynacre. Gerard died in 1558, and was succeeded by the Bishop of Sodor and Man, who was presented to the living by John Fleetwood and Peter Farington, patrons, by the grant of Sir Thomas Langeton.

In wills a concise and comprehensive history of the habits, customs, trades, and incidents of the time is often found. It is very clear from such wills that our forefathers held a very strong belief in purgatory, or, at least, they did not believe that "as the tree falls so shall it lie," for all chantries were founded and endowed for the express purpose of praying for the souls of the deceased, their friends, and all the faithful, and in many cases very valuable properties were left for this purpose in the "dead hand" of the Church. One of the most interesting local wills is that of Galfrid Legh, Esq., dated "Apyll 14, 1546."—(Ex. MS. Rev. James

Raine, M.A., *Lanca. Chantries*, vol. I, p. 72-3). By it he provides for the burying of his body at Wynwick, black and white gowns, tapers and torches, and orders that many masses be said and sung for the repose of his body and the salvation of his soul. He is also very considerate as to the temporal comforts of those who attend his funeral, which was, no doubt, a very large one, as he left to every householder in Wynwick and Hulme a legacy of 6s. 8d. On the day of his burial he ordered that "an honest dynner" should be given out of his estates to his friends, gentlemen, and priests. He left money for the repairing of churches and bridges and making of good and substantial roads, and was not forgetful of the poor of the neighbouring towns, the first mentioned of which is Wigan, whose poorest inhabitants received by his will £20. At funerals not only were the mourners feasted, but the horses that dragged the hearse were fed with currant bread, the superstition being that if they were not so fed they would never complete the journey to the place of burial.

For nearly two hundred years Wigan returned no representative to Parliament. In olden times, by the rights of purveyance, all the travelling and entertaining expenses of the king and his followers had to be paid by the inhabitants of the towns through which they passed, and this expense was so great that townspeople feared a royal visit more than political offenders now fear a royal commission appointed to inquire into cases of alleged bribery and corruption. Petitions were often drawn up by prosperous towns, fully describing their poverty, and beseeching the king not to come to them, and often offering him a handsome bribe to go another way. Thus, too, because of the expense, many boroughs entitled to the privilege of sending representatives refused to do so. Sometimes the merchants allowed their member to go upon condition that he would take his expenses out in goods from their shops.

The burgesses and the member generally had a written agreement about the expenses. In 1463, for instance, John Strange made a legal agreement with his constituents of Dunwich thus:—"John Strange granteth by these presents to be one of the burgesses for Dunwich, at the Parliament to be holden at Westminster, for which, whether it hold for longer time or short, or whether it fortune to be prorogued, the said John Strange granteth no more to be taken for his wages than a cade full of herrings and a half barrel full of herrings, to be delivered on Christmas Day next." The wages paid to the Wigan members were two shillings a day, and the burgesses of Wigan may have found this to be more than they could afford. Whatever may have been the cause, it sent up no member between 1306 and 1547, when Alexander Barlow and Giles Carus were returned. At this time Wigan contained 2,600 "howselynge people."—(E. libro B. Duch. Lanc.)

Sir Thomas Stanley, second son of the third Earl of Derby, was one of the two members for the county when Barton, Gerard, and Berners were members for Wigan. He had previously been member for Liverpool from 1547-52, when Carus and Gerlington were members for Wigan. Of this name Gerlington only the first three letters are visible in the record, which are now generally believed not to be the first part of Gerlington, but Gerard, who represented Wigan in three Parliaments and afterwards distinguished himself as a Master of the Rolls, and was knighted. His son became member for Wigan in 1555. Sir Thomas Talbot and Sir John Holcroft were members for the county in 1557-8, when Barton and Smyth were members for Wigan. Sir Thomas Langeton, of Newton, was the member for the county with Sir T. Stanley. He was High Sheriff in 1536-7, and succeeded his brother, Ralph, in the barony of Newton in 1503. The Langetons were the patrons of the Parish Church of Wigan and were Barons of Newton for 300 years, the first Langeton having acquired the estates by his marriage with the grand-daughter and heiress of Robert Banastre early in the 14th century. Thomas Stanley was presented to the living of Wigan by Fleetwood and Farrington, patrons, on the grant of the above-named Sir Thomas, after which the next six rectors were presented by the king. In 1562 William Gerard was member for Wigan when Sir Thomas Gerard, of Ince, the fifth in descent from John Gerard, M.P. for the county in 1422, was one of the two county members. He was the eldest son of Sir Thomas, whom he succeeded in 1523. Sir John Southworth, his colleague as M.P. for the county, had been imprisoned in the New Fleet, Manchester, in 1584, as a Popish recusant.

An Act passed in 1552 directed that "All the cottons called Lancashire cottons, full wrought for the sale, shall be in length twenty-two yards, and contain in breadth three-quarters of a yard in the water, and shall weigh thirty pounds in the piece at least." The exciseman who examined the pieces was called the Aulnager, which name is first officially mentioned in the long charter of James II.

A peculiar example of mob law happened in Wigan in 1565—August 14th. John Crosse had inherited from his forefathers a close with other lands in Wigan. He quietly took possession, but was surprised to find there were counter claimants in the persons of John Barron and Margaret his wife, Thomas Starkey and Joan his wife, and Randle Rylands, who each and all were, according to the opinion of John Crosse, people of no principle, evilly disposed towards him and Wigan society, neither fearing God nor regarding man. Although possession is nine points of the law, the claimants first quietly requested, then insolently demanded, John to vacate the premises, and allow them to take possession. He expressed surprise at their demand, showed them the pedigree of his family, explained his own descent and possession, and firmly refused to budge. They sent in their ultimatum, and

threatened to put him out by force or pull the house down over his head if he did not quietly withdraw. He did not withdraw, but like a man, conscious of right, he referred them to the law, and defied their force. War was declared. The five rude claimants, regardless of laws, statutes, and the Queen's peace, assembled all the riotous and disorderly persons of their own degree, harangued them at length, and persuaded them of the justice of their claim, for when a mob but hears one side of a question it is unanimous in its verdict and instant in its action. There was hurry-skurry, hooting and yelling, groans for Crosse, and cheers for themselves. Men and women armed themselves with pikes, staves, bills, household utensils, and deadly weapons, marched in a disorderly body, and, besieging the house of John Crosse, drove him out in the most unceremonious manner. He appealed to their sense of justice and their feelings of sympathy, but they only laughed him to scorn. They were unreasonable when he sought to explain. He resorted to force, but their violence was too great, and there was nothing left, after strategy, force, and reason had failed, but to seek the assistance of the law, which he did by summoning them before the royal Judge.—(See Flower's Visitation of Lanca. in 1567). The following is a copy of the petition of the plaintiff, John Crosse :—

"Lamentably complaining sheweth unto your good Honour your daily orator John Crosse of Liverpool in the County of Lancaster, Esquire, that whereas one Richard Crosse, grandfather to your orator, was in his lifetime lawfully seised among other lands of and in a close lying and being in Wigan in the said County of Lancaster, of an estate of inheritance, and so being seised died thereof seised, by and after whose death the said close descended and came as of right ought to descend and come to one James Crosse, father to your orator, as son and next heir of the said Richard Crosse, by reason whereof the said James Crosse entered into the premises and was thereof likewise of an estate of inheritance seised, and he so being thereof seised did in his lifetime by good and lawful conveyance assure and convey the said close with other lands to certain persons to the use of your orator and Alice, his wife, and to the heirs of their two bodies lawfully begotten, by virtue whereof your orator entered into the said close, and was thereof, together with his said wife, now deceased, seised of an estate of tail especial with reversion expectant, which descended after his father's decease, and hath ever since the same assurance quietly and without disturbance of any person occupied the same close, and hath converted the issues and profits to his use as lawful is for him to do. Nevertheless now so it is, if it may please your Honour, that one John Barrow and Margaret his wife, one Thomas Starkey and Joan his wife, and one Randle Rylands, being persons of very lewd and evil dispositions, not fearing God nor dreading and correction of the justice of the Queen's Majesty's laws and statutes, confederating themselves with divers other riotous and disordered persons to your orator unknown, of a wicked, lewd, covetous purpose, did, with riot and great disorder, assemble themselves together upon the 14th day of August last past, and then and there, some of them being armed with pike-staves, others with bills, and others with weapons of arms, did, with great violence and force of arms, and without all order of law, enter into the same close, being your orator's. And hath ever since kept the possession of the same with like force, and are minded, as their boasts and threatenings doth appear, still to keep the same, and to continue riot to the great disturbance of your orator's quiet possession and of the Queen's Majesty's peace and perilous example and encouragement of like offenders, and to your orator's disinheritation for ever, unless speedy remedy be therein had.

And albeit the same riotous persons divers times since their entering gently required by your orators quietly to depart from the possession of the same close, which they unlawfully have gotten, yet that to do they and every of them have denied, and yet do deny, to the perilous example of like lewd persons to attempt the like lewd offences, if this the lewd act attempted so boldly, contrary to the laws and statutes of the realm, may escape the due and condign punishment worthily deserved. In consideration whereof, may it please your Honour, the Queen's Majesty's writ of Privy Seal to be directed to the said John Barrow and Margaret his wife, to Thomas Starkey and Joan his wife, and to Randle Rylands, commanding them and each of them to appear before your Honour, and there to answer to the premises. And your orator shall daily pray for the long and prosperous success of your Honour's estate."

John Radcliffe, the eldest surviving son of Sir William Radcliffe of Ordsall, was appointed M.P. for Wigan, in the place of Richard Fortesque, Esq., in 1563, and afterwards (1571) as M.P. for the county. He was knighted in 1586, and succeeded to his father's title and estates in 1568. The names and dates of M.P.'s for the county may be seen in the "Lancashire and Cheshire Historian and Genealogical Notes." The grandson of the above-named Sir John Radcliffe was a zealous Royalist in the civil war, and was committed to the Tower for aiding the Earl of Derby at the siege of Manchester.

Hitherto all legal trials had been adjudged at the rector's court. Now the first public building, exclusive of the Parish Church, was built in the small space lying between the east and south entrances to the church. This was the Moot Hall, a representation of which is preserved in the borough arms. Here the Court Leet met and Common Pleas were tried. When it was built, in the sixteenth century, it was a work of superior excellence in local architecture, an adornment to the town, and a necessity for the proper transaction of legal affairs; but in the nineteenth century it was publicly voted an unseemly and gaunt obstruction, and, like despised old age, was hurried into oblivion by the usurpation of more youthful improvements nurtured by the advancements of time. In its latter days it was rented to the county magistrates for about as much as paid for the expenses of keeping it swept, but not garnished. For nearly three centuries law-breakers of every description had had their characters exposed within it; there they received their doom, and left as a legacy the smell of their polluted garments which had so accumulated until the premises smelt like the black hole of Calcutta.

In the first Parliament of Edward VI. (1547 to 1552) the two members for Wigan were Thomas Barlow and Thomas Carus. Thomas Carus, of Kirby Lonsdale, in the county of Westmoreland, was a barrister-at-law, and afterwards Chief Justice of the Queen's Bench, and sat as member for Lancaster in 1552-3 and 1566. Thomas Barlow, of Barlow Hall, near Manchester, was returned a representative for the borough in five different Parliaments. He was the son of Elias Barlow, of Barlow, Esq. He died in August, 1584, seventeen years after ceasing to be representative for Wigan.

William Gerard and Thomas Bromley were the Wigan members in the first Parliament of Elizabeth, 1558-9. Gerard was the younger brother of Sir Gilbert Gerard, the Queen's favourite Master of the Rolls. He sat for Preston in 1553, and died 15th April, 1583. Thomas Bromley, Esq., was related to the member for Liverpool of 1553-4, and is supposed to have been Thomas Bromley, of the Inner Temple, barrister-at-law, who sat for Bridgnorth in 1558, Guildford 1562, and who was elected Recorder of London in 1566, Solicitor-General 1569, and Lord Keeper of the Great Seal 26th March, 1569. He died in office 12th April, 1587, aged 57 years.

Unhappy indeed is the country which is involved in religious war. Lancashire at this period was the arena of such a strife. Romanism seemed to be predominant, and men acted as if the furies had decided that each man should be the judge of his neighbour's conscience and the executioner of his heretical friend. Wigan was imbrued in the strife, for there both parties were well represented. Toleration was unknown. The winning side raised its standard of presumptive infallibility, and gave no quarter. The zeal of religion drove enthusiasts beyond the bounds of mercy. Papacy *v.* Protestantism: These were the two sides, to one of which everyone had to declare himself an adherent. The beautiful and unfortunate Queen Mary, living in exile in the land to which she was the apparent heiress, was the representative of Romanism, and Elizabeth, the queen regnant, the defender of the Protestant faith. Mary had many adherents in the neighbourhood of Wigan. The local landed proprietors, as has been said, were chiefly of the Roman Catholic faith, but Protestant townsmen had still fresh in their memories the annals of bloody Mary. In the name of religion the parties determined to save the country from spiritual death and consequent political ruin. In the long reign of Elizabeth this, the Rebellion of the Earls (1569), was the only notable rising in the North. Northumberland and Westmoreland were the chiefs, and Lord Derby was also expected to join, as his two sons had already done, but the queen had already appointed him Lieutenant-Governor of the county, and he had taken the oath and so conscientiously fixed his determination. It was chiefly by his indefatigable efforts that the rebellion failed, although the crafty Cecil suspected his fidelity. Of course, there followed the usual public executions, confiscations, and rewards. Eight hundred were publicly gibbeted, and fifty-seven noblemen and gentlemen were attainted.

In the third Parliament of Elizabeth, 1571, the colleague to William Gerard was Owen Radcliffe, of Middleton and Langley, in Rochdale. He was descended from a younger branch of the Radcliffes of Radcliffe Tower, and was eldest son of Richard Radcliffe, of Middleton, whom he succeeded on August 1st, 1576. He died 30th September, 1599.

In 1550 (3rd Edward VI.) an issue was tried between Miles Gerard, Mayor of Wigan, and Sir Thomas Worsley, Sheriff of the county, as to the right of the Mayor of Wigan to sit with the justices of the county and to exercise the authority of a county magistrate in taking recognizances and granting sureties.—(Duchy Records, vol. VI., Placit g. n. 2.) Speaking of the charter of 16th February, 2nd William IV., Baines says (vol. III., p. 536):—"By the previous charter the mayor and ex-mayor (styled the justice) were alone justices of the peace for the borough, &c." This is incorrect. The charter of James II. expressly makes the recorder (as well as the mayor and ex-mayor) a justice of the peace for the borough.

Queen Elizabeth died in the 45th year of her reign, during which time there were 44 Sheriffs of Lancashire. The following is a list in regular rotation:—John Talbot, Rob. Worsley, Joh. Atherton, Joh. Southworth, Tho. Hesketh, Tho. Houghton, Edw. Trafford, Ric. Mollineux, Tho. Laughton, Edw. Holland, Joh. Preston, Tho. Butler, Edw. Trafford, Fran. Holt, Rich. Holland, Will. Boothe, Fran. Holt, Rich. Bold, Rob. Dalton, Johan. Fleetwood, Rad. Ashton, Edw. Trafford, Joh. Byron, Rich. Holland, Joh. Atherton, Edwar. Trafford, Tho. Preston, Richard Asheton, Johan. Fleetwood, Tho. Talbot, Rich. Mollineux, Rich. Bold, Jac. Asheton, Edw. Fitton, Richard Asheton, Radulp Asheton, Tho. Talbot, Richard Holland, Rich. Mollineux, Richard Asheton, Rich. Houghton, Robert Hesketh, Cut. Halsall, Edward Trafford.

CHAPTER XII.

Appointment of Mr. Fleetwood—Gambling—Early Marriages and frequent Divorces—Midwives—John Woolton, Wigan Author—Books—Fleetwood and Irish Affairs—Bull-baiting, &c.—Purring—Superstition—Wrestling—Tinkers—A Wigan Vet.—Shuttleworth's Accounts—Fleetwood and Social Immorality and Ungodliness—Witches—Francis Sherrington—William Banks—Fleetwood more Fierce than ever—Lord Derby—New Local Law—The Commissioners—Derby's Seminary, Bell—Fleetwood's Letters to the Lord Treasurer—Lord Derby's Letters—Parish Register—Leland's Account of Wigan—Printing Press Destroyed—Fanaticism of Lord Derby—Arms on the Windows of the Parish Church in the 17th Century—Quakers—Miles Gerard—Jesuits—Libel on Fleetwood—Wigan Longevity and Population.

IN the last year of the reign of the unlamented Mary and the first of time-honoured Elizabeth, Thomas Stanley was made Rector of Wigan on the presentation of John Fleetwood and Peter Farington, patrons for that turn, on the grant of Sir Thomas Langeton, knight. He must have been an old man when appointed, for he was Bishop of Sodor and Man in 1510, of which office he was deprived (although re-appointed to it in 1556) in the third year of Queen Mary. In 1559-60 he sued the Corporation of Wigan respecting Courts, and as Bishop of Man and Parson of Wigan he sued William Gerard respecting tithes of Ince and Hindley. Having been rector for 13 years, he resigned, and the celebrated zealot, Edward Fleetwood, was appointed in his place. The young Mr. Fleetwood had not a brilliant prospect before him, unless, indeed, the boundless labour of toiling, and carrying on constant war against an enemy only visible in his deeds of immorality, be considered such a prospect. Like all well-intentioned youth, he was full of an admirable Christian zeal, the Calvinistic principles of which were unsoftened by the conviction that it is human to err. He had avowedly entered on a great spiritual war in his parish of Wigan, determined neither to give nor to ask for quarter. He had studied well from books the theory of existence, but knew little of the practical world or the battle of life. He determined to make no allowances for deficiency of

education, prejudices, force of circumstances, habits or customs. By his beliefs in the Liturgy he drew the hard and fast line between English Episcopacy and non-Christianity. He had chosen or was chosen to be the servant of the Church, and he was conscientiously determined to be a faithful one. He was fixed to his principles and determined in his actions, as if his motto were that of St. Paul, "Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel." With what unutterable anguish must his young soul have lamented over the corruption, immorality, and infidelity of Wigan. The town must have seemed to him entirely given up to iniquity. As his range of experience widened his tendency to sympathise with the frailties of human nature contracted, and he became more hardened against sin and sinners, until, believing himself wrapped in the whole armour of Christianity, he set himself to uproot every symptom of evil. Little was appreciated in Wigan by his pious mind, so he stedfastly determined to oppose and overwhelm all opposition. Prejudice and zeal were linked in him: heretics were an abomination to him, deserving nothing short of destruction: time-servers and unbelievers were unconvertible brands, who could not be too soon hurried from the face of the earth to their inevitable doom: compromise was no part of his stern creed, and to forgive was but to palter with wickedness. Such were the firmly-fixed and bigoted principles of the young rector, who, on the resignation of the Bishop of Sodor and Man, was instituted on the 8th February, 1571, and held the living for 33 years.

Gambling was a notorious public-house amusement, and, as there was no Act compelling the closing of taverns, the players, eager to win, often drank and gambled all night, whilst the host or hostess, with rubicund face, looked on the winner with patronising airs, ever anxious to bring the requisite one gallon more to fill the empty horn tankards. This was the fashionable pleasure of young and old, rich and poor. Burgesses and apprentices had their particular houses of call, and the natural consequence was that burgesses became bankrupts, apprentices drunken thieves, and landlords flourishing proprietors. This was the first great enemy that Mr. Fleetwood had to contend against. It was a giant foe, but, he believed, quite amenable to his spiritual abilities. The growing demoralisation in the town was very marked. Cheating, swearing, lying, discontent, drunkenness, and want of principle were the acknowledged habits of gamblers. So great did the social evil become, and so well did Mr. Fleetwood expose it, that a law was passed forbidding gaming, and commanding servants and apprentices to be home not later than nine o'clock in the summer evenings and eight o'clock in the winter.

At this period a scandalous system of early marriages prevailed, productive of the life-long suffering of unhappy couples, or short misery and divorce. Among the rich matrimony was looked upon as a mere market for buying, selling, or preserving

properties and estates. To be marriageable is often, in the present age, simply to be considered marketable, but at this period boys and girls were married long before they could reasonably be considered marriageable. Mere children were married to cousins simply to preserve the name and keep estates and money in the family. The children had no idea of the relationships they formed, and generally discovered, when too late, they were indissolubly joined to persons, excellent and virtuous, but altogether unfitted to be their life-long companions. When they grew up to years of discernment and discretion, and met others more like the ideals of their hearts, the spirit of discontent and misery was immediately fostered, and led in all cases where it could be afforded to a mutual divorcement, after which the severed couples generally again wed according to their wishes. There were very few families of property in which there was not one example of those who, being knit together by the bonds of holy matrimony, were mutually separated by divorce. Of course, Wigan was in the fashion both in the marriage market and the divorce court. Mr. Barlow, the member of Parliament for Wigan from 1547 to 1557, had a nameson, who, when quite a lad, was married—that is, went through the marriage ceremony as if taking part in a dumb-show performance—to Elizabeth Belfeld, to whom a large share of her father's extensive possessions belonged; but in years of discretion he fell in love with Mary Brereton, the daughter of a knight, and, as was not unreasonable, young Mrs. Barlow fell in love with Mr. Edward Assheton, M.A., Rector of Middleton. They both afterwards married their ideal choice, but there was first of all the miserable boy and girl man-and-wife life, for Master Barlow was but a lad and Miss Brereton only seven years of age when led to the Wigan altar. The divorce was obtained in 1574, when Mr. Barlow repudiated all knowledge of the marriage ceremony, and declared that he never remembered having even spoken the words of matrimony to his wife. She, in giving her evidence, was not anxious to prove the legality or knowledge of the ceremony, yet guilelessly admitted that she had sent her betrothed a gilt book, and that he had sent her a knife, which she faithfully wore at her girdle. So prevalent and scandalous were these mercantile marriages and natural divorces that such immorality grew as to cause to be issued the homily against adultery.—(Stanley Papers, part II., notes, p. 211).

The members for Wigan during the fourth Parliament of Elizabeth (1572-1583) were Edward Fitton and Edward Elrington. Fitton was the eldest son of Edward Fitton, of Gawsworth, Cheshire, whom he succeeded in 1579. He sat for Borough Bridge in 1588, was afterwards knighted, and died in 1606. His eldest son was created a baronet in 1617, but the title died out in 1643. Elrington was the son of Edward Elrington, Treasurer of the Navy to Henry VIII. He was Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster to Queen Elizabeth.

At this time midwives were licensed by the bishop of the diocese upon condition that they attended "any woman labouring of child, being married, and professing the reformed faith, whether the wife of a minister or otherwise." Neglect or inattention would forfeit their licence. Women are generally more superstitious than men, but the superstition in chirurgical matters in the neighbourhood of Wigan was extraordinary. For a common and yet extraordinary example of this superstition, see the note on page 154 of the second part of the Stanley Papers.

From the year 1580 a new and important source of information in connection with the history of Wigan is obtained from the registers of baptisms, marriages, and burials, which are preserved from that date. They speak like living and welcome witnesses about an age long passed away. It has hitherto been considered that the oldest register of the Parish Church only dated from the Restoration of the Stuarts, but another royal 8vo., strongly-bound, volume has been discovered by the present rector (the Hon. and Rev. Canon Bridgeman) at Weston-under-Lizard, in Staffordshire. The registers in it of christenings and burials date from November, 1580, and the registration of marriages from 1594. It is presumed the list was accidentally conveyed to Weston-under-Lizard in 1750 with the effects of Dr. Roger Bridgeman after his death. Like an old witness risen from oblivion, this volume silently tells its tale in hieroglyphics traced with trembling hands. It is in a remarkably good state of preservation, and, although it is impossible to read it in the few places where age or misadventure has obliterated or disfigured it, yet, upon the whole, the writing is very legible. The register is a parchment book, but the churchwardens' accounts are in paper ledgers, the latter being only preserved from the memorable year of 1651. The first four existing baptismal registers of 1580 are:—

- " November 21 Rauffe Snarte f. James S. de Wigan.
- 22 Thomas higham f. Thomas Higham de
- 24 Richard harte f. Tho. h. de houghto'.
- December 4 Margaret fford. f. James ff. de Scowles."

The first extant christening of twins (?) in the Parish Church is dated the 11th of December of this year, when William and John Croichloe f. Gefferie C. d Wigan were baptised. From March to December of 1580 inclusive there are entered in the parish register 98 baptisms and 60 burials. The first extant registered marriage is that of Rauffe Wood to Agnes Brownlow on November 10th, 1594. According to this register there were only 24 couples married in 1594, and in 1595 only 13 couples. In specially large and distinct writing, apparently that of the rector, Mr. Fleetwood, himself, is entered the registration of the baptism of *Theodore Fleetwoode*, and two years afterwards, 29th March, 1593, in the same bold handwriting, *Christian fleetwoode*. Mr. Fleetwood was then in the 63rd year of his age. From the entries in these registers I have made the following calculation of

the approximate population of Wigan at the end of the sixteenth century. I have taken all the numbers on which the calculation is based directly from the register at the Parish Church.

Sanitary laws have been adopted and enforced in towns with the intention of reducing the rate of mortality, and statistics prove that the design has been a success. There are now fewer deaths in proportion to the population than formerly, and those who live attain a higher average age than our pre-sanitary ancestors. Statistics prove a great deal more than this. They clearly show that in suburban or rural towns the death-rate is far less than that of large manufacturing places. Medical evidence and statistics together prove that there are many fatal diseases altogether new to the medical profession, and also that there are fatal diseases peculiar to, and common in, manufacturing towns. In calculating the population of Wigan at the end of the sixteenth century these facts must be taken into consideration. The present exact rate of mortality of the town is known. It is now a large manufacturing and mining district frequented by fatal diseases which were altogether unknown in the sixteenth century, when it was but a rural town. Moreover the present death-rate would be four or five less per thousand but for one over-crowded district (Scholes), where children are not so well cared for as they might be, and where the infant death-rate is consequently very great. There is, therefore, the want of sanitation on the one hand and over-crowding and new diseases on the other to affect the calculation of population, and moreover the open air labours of the sixteenth century against the indoor close confinement of the nineteenth. As my present calculation is entirely based on the death-rate, I shall give the results at four different rates of 20, 25, 30, and 40 per thousand. The average death-rate throughout England then I accept as 25 out of every thousand, although I will take 20 as the basis for obtaining the maximum population of Wigan.

No. of Deaths in		At a Death-rate of 20 per 1000 gives a Population of	At a Death-rate of 25 per 1000 gives a Population of	At a Death-rate of 30 per 1000 gives a Population of	At a Death-rate of 40 per 1000 gives a Population of
1580 was 90	...	4,500	3,600	3,000	2,250
1582 „ 30	...	1,500	1,200	1,000	750
1583 „ 56	...	2,800	2,640	1,866	1,400
1584 „ 84	...	4,200	3,360	2,800	2,100
1585 „ 114	...	5,700	4,560	3,800	2,850
1586 „ 89	...	4,400	3,960	2,966	2,225
1587 „ 132	...	6,600	5,280	4,400	4,400
1597 „ 138	...	6,900	5,520	4,600	4,450
1598 „ 98	...	4,900	3,920	3,266	2,450
1599 „ 100	...	5,000	4,000	3,333	2,500
		46,500	38,040	31,033	25,375
Average population for ten years }	...	4,650	3,804	3,103	2,537

Sixty years after this period the population of Manchester was five thousand, located in ten streets, and one hundred years before this the population of Wigan was two thousand six hundred, being one thousand less than the population of Ormskirk. I consider the population of Wigan at the end of the sixteenth century might justly be stated as being between three and four thousand. Not a few cases of longevity in Wigan have been authentically recorded which tend to prove that the death-rate of the town was by no means high. Mr. Husan, of Wigan, died in 1778, aged one hundred and nine years; Mr. Wickstead, of Wigan, died in 1763, aged one hundred and eight years; Mrs. Wygan, of Wigan, died in 1806, aged ninety-four years, and left more than two hundred descendants.—(See Bailey's Records of Longevity). There are more wonderful instances of longevity than these, for, notwithstanding the great benefits and advantages derived from coal and steam, they seem to have poisoned the Lancashire air in the neighbourhood of Wigan. Almost the first thing in the neighbourhood that attracts the attention is the stunted stumps of trees. There are no ancient oaks remaining to tell by the rings on their distorted trunks that they were reverently planted by the Druids. There are no wide-spreading chestnuts to cheer the townsman with a gay floral display in spring. There are neither old fir trees, nor beeches with heads towering above their sylvan fellows, nor hawthorns of the olden times, from which the milk-maids plucked their May. They are all comparatively young, and, where unsheltered, sickly, dying, or dead. But it was not always so. The tender leaves, which are the lungs of plants, inhaled no such poison three centuries ago as now floats in the air. Vast forests were the habitat of wild animals, and extensive plains, like small American prairies, were the abode of oxen of a far superior breed to any found in Spain. The inhabitants of the town, too, were not like many of those now cooped up in unhealthy "yards" after the daily labour of the mill. The air, we are told, was subtile and piercing, not troubled with gross vapours or foggy mists, and consequently the inhabitants presented every appearance of a hardy and healthy race. Then Wigan was famed, not as having the highest birth and death-rate, but as having long-lived and healthy inhabitants, who were not subject to strange and unknown diseases. Examples and statistics of a rude sort prove the truth of this. Before registers were kept there were many centenarians, but since they came into vogue the inhabitants have been content to throw off their mortal coil at the modest age of three score and ten. Notwithstanding this, it is written in the annals of Wigan, as a fact, that one, Fairbrother by name, died at Wigan in the 138th year of his age (1770). At the time of his death the youngest of his four sons was 104 years old. Old Fairbrother was a cooper, and it would be interesting to know whether he abstained from tasting the prospective contents of the barrels he made, or whether he joined in the evil habit of fashionable intemperance to excess, and so prolonged his days.

Homely were the manners and customs of the Wigan burghal aristocracy of the sixteenth century, and yet no one had any difficulty in drawing the distinguishing line between superiors and inferiors. Though hard labourers themselves, they were far above toiling servitude and far below luxurious lords. Each sedulously attended to his own business, like a well-to-do settler in a new country, such as those now in the British Colonies or the United States, although they certainly did not work so very hard, for the great object of life then was not, as now, to amass wealth, but simply to gain enough to produce what was then considered a maximum of happiness, although that now would only be the minimum of misery. They had their special suit of clothes for Sundays and holidays, their work-a-day garbs, and that was usually the extent of their wardrobe. Luxuries, according to the modern idea, were unknown. A quiet and jovial drink at the chief room of the tavern was a social necessity; such social gatherings were really the only means of self-culture. There interesting news, often very old, and local topics were so frequently discussed that the majority of old men generally knew every detail of every local gossip, and were in themselves living local histories. These were harvest times for the Wigan attorneys. Many old deeds are extant which were then drawn up in the town, and yet writing was an accomplishment common only to a very few. In searching over the old registers of baptisms, marriages, and burials, I found the writing in most cases—where not actually damaged or defaced—exceedingly legible, and in some cases artistic and beautiful. But who wrote these pages? In all likelihood it was the clergyman himself. Every page is signed by the curate, and witnessed by the two churchwardens. For many years the curate was Mr. Thompson, who signs himself "Thompson, minister." Every page is witnessed by two churchwardens, but, alas! not one can write his own name, but all make their mark with hieroglyphics that would not seem out of place on a Ninevite slab. The most artistic and most general mark bears a remote likeness to a very rude target with three supports, being perhaps a simple object most familiar to them. But the century is saved from scholastic disgrace, for one churchwarden, William Lamb, succeeds in making, apparently with extraordinary effort and no small pride, marks that can be deciphered as his name. This he first does in the year 1600. Every year he writes his name more and more legibly, as if practising to gain perfection, although at the best it is still so bad as to be sufficient circumstantial evidence to prove that the words are the only two he can write. From the beginning of the next century every churchwarden signs his name.

Mr. Fleetwood proved himself a most zealous supporter of the Crown and Church, and the Crown was not forgetful of him in its time of need. Ireland was a strong Roman Catholic country, and from thence the Pope, determined not to lose England

without a struggle, prepared to attack England, and there his supporters landed in great force. The living of Fleetwood was a rich one, and he was well able to afford great support to the Government in worldly substance, as he had proved himself so strong with his spiritual grace. He was one of three Lancashire clergymen called upon to fit out a Light Horseman by the 20th October, 1580, for the queen's service in Ireland, and, moreover, if he neglected to do so—so ran the royal order—he was to “give an account for his forgetting himself.” The expense of this outfit was estimated at not less than £25, being a very large amount for those days.—(Peck's *Desid. Cur.*, vol. I., p. 95, and *Stanley Papers*, part II., pp. 132 and 146). He held a very humble opinion of the ways of the world in general, and of Wigan in particular. He acted as if he believed he had in his borough a religious-charnel house to clean out. The inhabitants were mostly composed of two parties, holding extreme views from him—the Puritans, who abhorred his frankincense of resin-pitch and brimstone, then constantly used at the Parish Church, and the Papists, who were to him heretics, and brands whom he had no wish to pluck from the fire, but rather was wishful to hasten them thither. With such a religious mixture the county was inundated from Holland after the death of Mary. As many as 600 recusants were presented at one time at the Lancaster Assize Court. Fleetwood was horrified to find that Sundays were holidays when churches were empty. The Parish Church bells only rang to gather the people to their debased and debasing sports. The priests in the county generally were not distinguished scholars and the people ignorant, and wise Jesuits were furtively training the masses in the papal doctrines. The Wiganers gave Fleetwood no help or encouragement in capturing heretics, but rather connived at their escape. The justices themselves did not summon “all parsons, vicars, curates, churchwardens, and sworn men, and examine them on oath how the statutes of 1st and 23rd Elizabeth are obeyed.” Yea, even the “coroners and justices and their families do not frequent church, and many have not communicated at the Lord's Supper since the beginning of her Majesty's reign.” Drunkenness, gambling, and sports took the place of all ecclesiastical services, and immorality, according to Mr. Fleetwood's belief, recklessly ruled. Some of the enormities of local wickedness were harmless pleasures in the opinion of many, but with him all that savoured of worldliness were the works and devices of Belial for ensnaring the souls of men.

Bull-baiting was a common source of amusement in the principal towns in England, and, although not specially recorded, was doubtless a source of rare sport on the meadows or school-common of Wigan. Bear-baiting was a great national sport, patronised by Royalty. The Master of the Bears was an office held under the Crown at a salary of sixteen pence a day. The Queen was entertained at a bear-baiting exhibition at Hatfield, and expressed great entertainment and

pleasure at the sight, and that in her 67th year. Cock-fighting certainly was common, and that up to a very recent date, for even colliers in modern "good times" kept their game cocks for Sunday and play Monday sports, when bets of generally a week's wages were laid on either the one side or the other. In these times also hounds of the best breeds were kept, and received better treatment often than the wives of the owners. Bull dogs of the most ferocious types were the pets of the family, and their battles with other dogs or tussles with rats were the only interesting subjects of conversation. Then, too, were pigeons household gods, whose flights were known to a second.

At tournaments single combat was the greatest attraction, as it forms also the most interesting chapter on narratives of the battle field ; but a strange system of single combat called "up and down" fighting began to be prevalent in Wigan, and was more brutal than a fixed fight between a man and a wild animal, and yet it drew crowds of wondering admirers. It was a mutual agreement, for some fixed bet, between two men to strike with fists or feet any part of the body, whether standing, lying, or rolling about. Heavy wooden clogs with iron toe points and large horny hands dealt the blows. Biting, although not forbidden, was considered unmanly. As recently as 1876, in the field at Rylands' mill, the writer witnessed a purring match between two sturdy fellows which was a mere repetition of what was frequent in the 18th century. The combatants were two young colliers, who, ready to begin, stood a few yards apart, with their eyes fixed, and teeth set like two enraged bull-dogs. They rushed at each other, wrestled, and fell, whilst from 20 to 30 onlookers, forming a ring, encouraged each his favourite. Long they struggled, each in turn holding the other down on the ground with his hands whilst kicking with his clogs. In half an hour not a shred of clothing was left on their bodies. Shirts and trousers lay in shreds, like the feathers of two infuriated and unbeaten game-cocks. But the sharp-toed clogs were still there, and still the men clutched each other's flesh—the hair being cropped close—wrestled, kicked, and growled, till at last one, pressing the other down with dreadful advantage, drove his right foot into the other's skull, and won the battle, for the foe lay senseless on the ground. The victor rose and wept, but he wept not because he had half-killed his "friend," but because, as he said, "I have fought seventeen battles, and never was bitten before." After a while the victim recovered, wrapt himself in his rags, and slunk away without saying a word. The contest was for a pair of new clogs, which the victor claimed and carried away. To such an extent were these brutal contests, or purring matches, carried that at almost every assize in Lancashire cases of murder and manslaughter were tried. On the conviction of manslaughter from kicking many judges sentenced the prisoners to be burned in the hand, which punishment was not abolished till the third year of George IV. (1823).

Wrestling in Lancashire has always been a popular and manly sport, but the Wigan style is of a peculiar nature, and exists to this day. It is much to the advantage of wrestlers to get a "grip" of the opponents, and to avoid this it is customary in the north to wear, as at football, a close-fitting jersey jacket. But the purchase of a jersey incurs expense, and this the lower order of Wiganers avoid by practising in a nude state, with the exception of a scanty bathing costume—nothing more than wrestling drawers. I have frequently witnessed (1881) such contests in a field on the banks of the Douglas, in the presence of a group of admiring friends of the rivals. Races in such costumes were not unusual during the last century. The frequency of these contests in the county gave rise to the following riddle :—

"As I was going over Rooley Moor, Rooley Moor shaked,
I saw four-and-twenty men running stark nak'd;
The first was the last, and the last was the first."

For the benefit of those who are not good at guessing the answers to riddles, it may be said that the answer to this is—the 24 naked spokes of a wheel.

Ignorance fosters superstition. The superstitious beliefs of Wigan, in common with other Lancashire places, show that its education was at a very low ebb. Every peculiar phenomenon of nature that was not understood was believed to be supernatural. The most common beliefs were those of the powers of witches, and the assuming of some natural shape by the Evil One, and that always with the mere intention of surreptitiously purchasing souls. His Satanic majesty feasted on souls, according to the popular beliefs of the period, as the Lancashire giant, Tarquin, breakfasted on babies. He appeared as a man or a beast, as best suited his design, and gave estates or money, according to the value of his purchase. If anyone harboured an ardent wish for power or influence, the insinuating Devil would grant it by purchase; or if any young woman wished for a lord, she was sure, at least, to get a yeoman, but this only on the consideration that, at a fixed hour and day, his covenanters should be his, and when the bargain was once made it was irrevocable. On similar conditions he granted marvellous powers to witches, who were not always wizened hags, but sometimes young women of such prepossessing appearance that even yeomen and lords could not resist their fascinations, but were wooed, won, and wed by them. Such witches could enslave and harass their enemies, and bring dreadful murrains on land and cattle. Distance was no obstacle to them, for with their magic wands they could summon ships in which to sail over seas or mount their broomsticks and ride through the air; but when they were once caught, they were as helpless as Samson with his shorn locks.

As there are many words which, in the sixteenth century, had quite a different meaning from what they have now, so there were some important trades then

which are now insignificant, and even considered despicable. The tinkers, for instance, to which honest calling the great John Bunyan belonged, were not, as now, the coarse, quasi-gipsy class, who go about helping themselves at farm-houses, getting drunk in the town, and reading fortunes in the suburbs, but comparatively well-to-do travelling tradesmen, who mended tinware and chairs, and were generally useful in repairing. They had no fixed place of abode, but, when they had exhausted the work of a town or village, wandered from one country-house to another, where they were hospitably received as superior beggars, and paid liberally for their small jobs. In the accounts of the Shuttleworths of Smithals and Gawthorpe, by their steward, and whose diary, by the way, is an excellent index of current prices, it is found that a tinker's charge for mending a dripping-pan was one penny, which was a large sum when one considers that in the same month a quarter of mutton cost seventeen pennies. Then, by the account of this steward, who was a well-to-do farmer, on his special visit to Wigan at the beast fair of St. Luke's, in October, he, with his natural liberality, spent with three old friends he met there the extravagant sum of sevenpence. According to his interesting diary, the mending of his kettle by a tinker cost him one penny, and the killing and dressing of a cow threepence, and again five days of hard labour at pulling up weeds in the garden cost him sixpence, and in the same month he treated three men to dinner, which cost him elevenpence. These are expenditures noted in his diary as with a feeling of regretful remorse for his unbridled extravagance.

Wigan was a great horse fair, and horse-dealers then were even less honest than they are now. It was no unusual thing to buy a horse at one end of the market at a low rate, clip and otherwise disguise him, and then to re-sell him, as another horse, to his previous owner at the other end of the fair. The horse doctor of Wigan had a thriving trade. He was consulted specially on the market days by suspicious buyers, and bribed by confident dealers, as well as pecuniarily applied to by local breeders. Robert Markland was the Wigan Vet., and for medicines and treatment his charges were as low as fivepence for a perfect cure, and as high as fifteen pence. A dozen hempen halters cost one and tenpence, and the market price of four bridles, breast-plates, and bits was six and sevenpence, a bridle bit alone costing fivepence. Another curious fact was that "Two boards to mend a gutter between two houses at Lastoke cost one shilling," being half the price of a waistcoat. At the Wigan Market on Ascension Eve the current price of a heifer was 30s. 6d. and an ox 51s. 11d., while a month's fodder for a horse cost 1s. 8d., and three calves' skins sold for one and fivepence, a cow skin at the same time fetching the high price of 6s. 7d. The author of this important diary never visited Wigan or Wygonne, as he sometimes spells it, without spending at least threepence, and on one occasion,

November, 1587, when a special show of horses was made before the lieutenant of the county, he spent no less than twelvepence, when his cattle were specially admired. In November, 1589, as provision for a special feast, he bought in Wigan Market one shilling's worth of fish and fresh water trouts. At the annual fair of 1594 he bought at Wighann two stirks, one of which had a broken leg, for six and twopence.—(The Shuttleworth Accounts, part I.)

The reign of Elizabeth was the great period of literature, both of middle and modern English. Authors were cropping up all over the land, and Wigan had two distinguished representatives. John Wolton was born at Wigan of "honest parents and worshipful by his mother's side." He was educated at Oxford, and suffered exile with his uncle, Bishop Nowell, at Strasburg, through the Marian persecutions. On his return he was installed Warden of Manchester Collegiate Church, but continued there only for a very short time, because he was made Bishop of Exeter in 1579. He zealously exhorted all, by precept and example, by his speeches and his writings, to conform to the principles of the Reformation. Two hours before he died (March 13th, 1593) he wrote a letter "full of wisdom and piety." He was the father-in-law of Francis Godwin, Bishop of Hereford. He entered Brasenose College, Oxon, 26th October, 1553, graduated as B.A. in 1555, 26th April.

Roger Dodsworth's account of the Bishop's parentage, &c., is as follows:—"John Wolton, Bp of Exeter was sisters sonne to Alex' Nowell Deane of Paules. Mr. Chambers p'son of the Church of Newton Kyme nr Tadcaster in Yorkshire 14 Sep 1627 told me he did teach this Bp Woltons children and did copy over 4 bookes of this Bp's making viz one called The Armor of Proofoe, wch afterwards was contrived into Section 2, David's Chaine, Dedicated to the E. of Bedford. 3, The Immortalitie of ye Soule, Dedicated to Wm. Cecill Ld Burleigh and ye 4th The ffortresse of ffayth. Mr. Chambers told [me] he was born att Whalley in Lanc, others att Pendleton adjoyning [2 miles N.E. of Whalley]. Howbeit Dr. Goodwin [Godwin] his son in lawe in his Catalogue of Bps [ed 1615, pp 414-15] sayth yt hee was borne at Wiggan in ye sd co."—(MSS. vol 153 WW p. 152).

Godwin's account is as follows:—"1579 Eliz 22, 36 [th Bp]: Iohn Wolton my most reverend father in law, being a Canon residentiary of the Church of Exceter, was consecrate in the beginning of Aug. 1579. He was borne at Wiggen in Lancashire, and hauing stayed in Oxford but a few yeares, in the beginning of Queene Mary attended into Germany his uncle the thrice reverend Alexander Nowell after Deane of Powles, his mother's brother, with whom hee stayed there all Q. Marie's time. He sate Bishop almost 15 years; dyed March 13 1593 being 57 yeares of age, and lieth buried in the south side of the Presbytery neere the place where wee see a Monument of touch and free stone erected vnto the memory of him."

In the fifth Parliament of Elizabeth (1584-1585) the two members for Wigan were William Gerard and Thomas Grimsditch. Gerard, of whom little more is known than that his daughter was married to Richard Walmsley, Esq., had been member for the borough during the first three Parliaments of the reign, and Grimsditch represented Manchester in the previous Parliament. In the next Parliament (October 15th, 1586,) Peter Legh displaced Grimsditch. He was the representative of the Leghs of Lyme, and son-in-law of Sir Gilbert Gerard, Master of the Rolls, who had represented the borough in 1553 and 1555. He sat for the borough in the next Parliament, and for the county of Cheshire in 1601. He was knighted 2nd July, 1598, and died February 17th, 1636. His direct line failed in 1797.

The Rev. Edward Fleetwood, B.D., was determined to regenerate his backsliding parish. There was no good he could think of—his good being evil in the eyes of many—which he did not prosecute with ardour. He was specially aggravated to find his parishioners would not attend his services on Sunday. He zealously spent the week in finding out their faults, writing convincing and condemnatory sermons, and was heartily grieved to find they would not come and listen to his admonitions. Like a true philosopher he set himself to find out the cause which, of course, lay not in himself. To his horror and disgust he discovered that his flock liked small beer, worldly amusements and good fellowship, and jocular provincialisms better than his prepared and learned homilies. In those days there was no closing, or Forbes McKenzie, Act. The doors of the Black Horse, Bird and Bairn, and every tavern were open to all, as well as the doors of the venerable Parish Church, and, horror to relate, men preferred having beer with their pence to giving it to church collections. This was too much for Mr. Fleetwood. It was very hard that, at the tolling of the bell, people would come the length of the Market Place, crowding and gossiping there and then break off into parties, some for public-houses, some to the Common, some to the meadows, and many actually to bull-baiting and bear-baiting on his own demesnes whilst he was laying down the principles of the precious truth to well-nigh empty pews. It was more than any zealot could bear. He denounced, anathematised, and excommunicated, but Wigan was Wigan still. He enlisted the sympathies of the righteous few, but the wicked many went on in their old courses. The people persisted in devoting to recreation and amusement that time which Mr. Fleetwood declared should be occupied in devout humiliation and prayer.

The enthusiasts of the town were stirred up to behold the enormities of the evil. On the other hand, let it not be forgotten that there was then no Factory Act, no nine hours' movement, and no Saturday afternoon for the working classes. Twelve hours was considered a short day's work, and Sunday was the only day that could possibly be taken as a day of rest. But Mr. Fleetwood thought only of

strictly keeping the Fourth Commandment. Having preached in vain, he took the machinery of the law to his help, and found it was insufficient, for, although the people were clearly breaking the moral law, they were still abiding by the law of the land. The father of lies and all his powers seemed allied against Mr. Fleetwood, but he was not to be done or cast down. With the dreadful state of local affairs he acquainted the two members of Parliament, William Gerard, Esq., and Thomas Grimsditch, Esq. A new law was made, which held good till the times of James I. He failed to persuade, so he determined to coerce. Coercion was a failure, for the law was not only repealed, but gave birth to the royal "Book of Sports." During the time the Act was in force there was no piping and dancing in the Market Place as of old during divine service. Then the voice of the minstrel was silent, and gambolling in the fields and gambling in taverns were stopped. The mayor, bailiffs, civil officers, and churchwardens, during the service, were playing at policemen, and Mr. Fleetwood was lecturing to the sinners of the town. Doubtless the change was agreeable to these officials. His reforms, although highly dissatisfactory to the town generally, resulted in a decrease of public-houses and compulsion to sell not less than a full quart of ale at once, which, no doubt, had the effect of making one loving cup go further round. Moreover, he fixed the price of a full quart of beer at one penny.

But he had other and greater researches to make. During 1585-6 a famine and murrain visited the neighbourhood. He was lord of the manor and rector of the parish, and therefore it was his bounden duty to find out the cause of these disasters, and he set himself right zealously to the work, for in men of such prejudices conviction comes before reasoning. His mind was previously made up, and, of course, with his usual success, he discovered the cause and the cure. He had an eye to sanitary reform, but it was the sanitation of morality and religion. He never thought of the physical filthiness of the people and want of drainage in his borough. He could only see that the people had sunk into the moral slough of despond, and that the famine and murrain were the deserved visitation of Providence. Yea, he traced it further. He discovered that Wigan particularly, and England generally, was abandoned to the power of the Evil One, who had delegated his power to old, wrinkle-faced widows. It was the witches, he found, that brought the murrain on the cattle, so woe to the Witches of Wigan! He, like Infallibility personified, persecuted them without mercy. To be ugly was sufficient to be considered a witch. Fuller says of the Lancashire women:—"I believe that the God of Nature having given fair complexions to the women of this county, art may save her pains (not to say her sins) in endeavouring to better them." Not these, but hags were the Fleetwood witches. Bed-ridden beldames and honest old women,

whose faces had been wrinkled with care; subjects for pity, not for blame! He could smell the brimstone about them as distinctly as the most ignorant in his parish. He tormented and persecuted them from no spirit of devilry, but from a candid and conscientious belief that they were the hirelings of sin, and that he himself was a servant of sanctity. Woe to wicked Wigan! seemed to cry the persecuted zealot.

The fickle nature of a growing civilisation has been nowhere more clearly shown than in the history of England. Fluctuations in religion and politics: variations in the causes and consequences of war—foreign and civil: changes of customs and transformations of costumes: rise and fall of families: redistribution of wealth—these are but a few of the remarkable characteristics in the growth of the English constitution. Nowhere in the kingdom was change more marked or rapid at this period than in the neighbourhood of Wigan. Spiritual opinions were the causes of many temporal changes. The property of recusants and Nonconformists was often sold to nominal purchasers. One Wiganer who benefited largely by such transactions was Francis Sherrington, “a wealthy man, a land buyer, and money lender,” and frequent guest under the hospitable roof of Lord Derby. He was supposed to be the brother of William Sherrington, of London, merchant, whose daughter, Susan, about 1574, married James Bankes, of Winstanley.—(Lanc. MSS., vol. VI., p. 179, and Gregson’s Ped. of Bankes).

Unfortunately there was at this time a great scarcity of labour in Wigan and throughout the country generally. Thousands of able-bodied men were able either to work or go to war. Healthy men of honest purpose were deeply grieved when, for the first time, they were thrown out of employment. It is the lot of man to earn his living by the sweat of his brow, and to be idle without being able to live independent of work is certainly by the enforced idler considered a disgrace, as well as misfortune. But this fine feeling of sensitiveness soon wears off, especially if the scarcity of work be great. Discontent takes its place and then an overbearing spirit of dishonest independence and arrogance. The disbanded retainers of nobles were infesting towns, and their numbers and arrogance were so great that the public sympathy first raised in their behalf had now assumed a determined opposition and hatred. Want drove the tramps to despair, and Wigan, in common with other towns, took up the cudgels of defence against the idlers, for whose services there was now a great demand. They had reached the verge of rebellion. Their spirits were like prepared gunpowder, to which the match had only to be applied. They were the raw material for conspirators, assassins, and rebels. They had tasted the fruits of idle independence, were soured against servitude, and unfit for settled occupation. Discontented leaders of parties saw and seized their opportunity. A *causus belli* was wanted to aid religion, and the cry was, the prosperity of the working classes. Elizabeth was

on the throne: papacy was in danger: Protestants were heretics, and to fight against heresy was the duty and glory of all. Queen Mary had been cruelly persecuted, and unmercifully murdered, said her partisans. Help was offered by the powerful Spaniard; yea, the fleet was on the sea, and all that was wanted was the rising of the people.

The Pope had objected to the accession of Queen Elizabeth, for, said he, "England was a fief of the Apostolic See: that she could not succeed, being illegitimate: that the reigning Pontiff could not reverse the decrees of his predecessor against the marriage." The entire separation of the Church of England from Rome was settled from that moment. The day of Papacy was over, and English Episcopalianism established. There is a lull before and after the storm. After all great movements, physical, political, or otherwise, there is invariably a reaction, and action and reaction are said to be equal. The reactionary religious war began, and, like the returning tide, which spreads its stormy billows over the sometimes forsaken beach, with dreadful revenge it ravaged the coasts of ruthless victors. Protestants came out of their hiding places, and Papists rushed into them for shelter. In those days the true religion seemed to be what the law demanded, and the law, and, therefore, religion, changed with changing governments. The Papists had had their day, when Protestantism was treated like the great personified Antichrist; now Protestantism, like a refreshed giant, gains the advantage, and the Papal Antichrist is trodden under foot. There is a great demand for soldiers of the cross, but not for men of peace. Spies, scouts, and persecutors are wanted all over the land. Ferrets to unearth the blood-stained Catholics, and hounds to hunt them in every county! Churchmen to pronounce absolution on the red-handed murderer of Papacy! Fox-like friends to lie in wait for the sayings of the unwary! Hypocrisy to catch sincerity! What a time of happy revenge and glorious victory the triumphant Protestants are having. Parson Fleetwood, of Wigan, in his burning zeal, hunts out the secrets of families and the sources of scandal, and as people who look for faults always find them, so he constructs every evil rumour as the work of some heretic, to find out whom it is his godly duty. Earl Derby, too, for the sake of Christ, becomes the accomplice of Fleetwood and the slave of the Devil, and hunts the suspected souls of poor old mortality with as much zeal as if every soul he cast with the firebrands of sin would place a special jewel in his own crown of glory. Between these two zealots Wiganers had a miserable existence. Men of one denomination eagerly hunted others at the bidding of their supreme power like dogs unleashed in the chase. Ignorant men and women were proud to be the tools of such men of influence who desired the destruction of honest thinking men simply because they differed from them in religious opinions. Inhabitants who could not

exercise their own thinking powers were proud to show their zeal by allowing themselves to be guided by the acts and wishes of those in authority, and thus merely gain protection for themselves. Those who had no brains were the puppets of the crafty. Those without money were the tools of the unscrupulous rich. Good men were hunted by hypocrites: avarice hunted prosperity, cant hunted sincerity, and dissimulation hunted self-preservation, as if the persecutors felt in their hearts that they only were holy, and were the fit and chosen subjects to work out the unsought vengeance of the Deity on those whose opposite convictions proved them unworthy to live, and, being past all the fulness of redemption which their own creed taught, fit only to die and to be cast into the pit. False zeal, dissimulation, revenge, and hypocrisy ran rampant in the streets of Wigan in 1587, being the 29th year of the reign of good Queen Bess of happy memory. It was a "critical year," says the honest historian, Strype, and Lancashire was specially to be looked after. In that year Wigan sprang into historical prominence. It was then like a rabbit warren, where Papists and favourers of Papists swarmed in fear of their lives. Protestant yeomen and feeling-hearted gentlemen of the neighbourhood, forgetting and forgiving the persecutions they themselves had suffered, took pity on the persecuted wretches, and let them shelter in their barns, shippens, and outhouses, and were sometimes bold enough to feed them, as the Hebrews of old fed their lepers. Burgesses and poor inhabitants allowed heretics to hide in their garrets whilst the "very good lord Derby" and the "holy Fleetwood," like blood-thirsty hounds, searched every street and farm yard. Rumour and suspicion tainted every man's character, except that of the sycophants that crouched like curs at the heels of Derby or Fleetwood. Men who openly refused to aid and abet them were marked as recusants, whilst those who, for their personal interest, seemed to prevaricate, or were inactive in their endeavours to persecute, were characterised as of cunning and subtle device. Their keen eyes were alike on the lawyers, merchants, tradesmen, and labourers of Wigan.

Parson Fleetwood was the second son of William Fleetwood, of Plumpton, by his first wife, Bridget Spring, of Suffolk. He had now been sixteen years the Rector of Wigan, and had made more foes than friends among the upper classes, including his own bishop, because of his political clericalism. No doubt he was of honest purpose, though certainly of mistaken zeal. He was better fitted for a persecuting attorney than a servant of the gentle Gospel. He knew Wigan well, down even to the very hovels that, to people of the present time, would look more like piggeries than human habitations. He knew the abodes of avowed Papists and the lurking places of suspected recusants. He knew there were men in the town who were Papists or Protestants as best suited the times and their own purposes. He knew many who would not conform to the rights of the Church who were neither Papists nor Churchmen,

but honest Puritans. He was the shepherd of the parish flock, and he determined to force it into the fold. As a clergyman it was his privilege to be admitted to every house, and it was not against his principles to further the prosperity of his church by what worldly men would call mean means. As the rector of a very rich living, and the lord of the manor, he had access to the houses of all persons of influence. There was open door to him at the houses of the better classes in the town, who lived in superior buildings of brick or brick and stone in the Standishgate and Market Place, the Hallgate, Millgate, or Wallgate. Such people were now prosperous enough to afford the luxuries of chaff beds for their masters and straw for their servants, and as a middle class, conscious of their growing political and social importance, were proud to welcome as a guest or visitor such a representative of the nobility. Now, instead of the flat dishes and spoons of wood used by those in the back streets and courts and alleys, the tradesmen, burgesses, and yeomen could boast of pewter platter and silver or tin spoons, tidily wrapt up for special occasions, like the rector's visit, or for the use of the family on Sundays. The ground floors of their rooms were paved with flag stones, whereas those of the lower orders had still the old, less expensive, fashion of hard baked clay floors, covered with rushes from the neighbouring bogs or marshes, and were seldom "mucked" out oftener than once a week, being the especial labour of Saturday, when the rubbish, thrown out into a continually accumulating heap before the door, was like that from the lair of a wild beast. To all these had the rector access, and over all had Derby spies, and these two great worthies came to the conclusion that Wigan was going headlong to the Pope and to ruin, and they determined to summon all their giant strength to destroy the wicked and save the righteous. He had visited the Earl of Derby, preached in his chapel, dined with him, joked perhaps with his fool Henry, listened to the players who entertained the many guests, and criticised with his Christian eyes both host and guest; he had called upon and conversed with burgesses and labourers of the town and yeomen of the suburbs, he had listened to the plaints of the poor and the gossip of the idler—in short, he knew everything about the whole neighbourhood, and, lamenting the sad condition of local irreligion, and his own want of power to punish where he could not persuade, he proposed to Lord Burghley, the Lord Treasurer of the Queen, that a new Ecclesiastical Commission should be issued (Cotton MSS., Titus, b. 2), with many of the lesser gentry and clergy included in it. He was dissatisfied with the Commission, which was then dealing leniently with heretics. He confesses that he attended the assizes himself with the intention of listening, spy-like, to cases, and hearing the punishments awarded, and he was shocked to find so much leniency. There was too much lukewarmness, if not a decided want of zeal on the part of the Commission. There was too little bloodshed and physical

torture and too few lives taken as awful examples. He was hurt to the very heart, and could only think of one revenge—a revenge that can only be taken by clergymen. He preached the Commissioners' faults in their very faces from the pulpit before the congregation, who, no doubt, would rejoice at his boldness. He told them plainly of the corruptions of the time and place, and reminded them of their duties, so unfulfilled that the evils grew instead of lessened, until their guilty consciences might well have made cowards of them all. But they were callous judges, for, strange to say, they were uninfluenced by his holy homily, and he, in increased indignation, wrote to Lord Burghley, depicting to him the sad state of affairs. His proposal was most offensive to the aristocratic assembly of Commissioners, who sent a remonstrance to Burghley, which was disregarded, and Fleetwood's advice accepted. In his advice he complains, like a petulant schoolboy and bigoted egotist, of his unsatisfactory interview with Lord Derby, who had just returned from Flanders, and had not yet entered heartily into the persecuting spirit, except by proxy. In his correspondence suspected persons are mentioned with great minuteness as to character and opinion that could only be excelled by a criminal detective. High and low, rich and poor, are named by the god-like inquisitor with his confirmed opinion. He owns that even his keen eye fails on some occasions to tell what some men really are. He has his doubts about the soundness of the doctrine of not a few. He is willing to believe in the sincerity of Lord Derby, but he also believes that he is badly influenced by "the suggestions of some evil instruments about him." The reverend gentleman characterises the principal inhabitants of Wigan after this fashion:—"Halsall is a lawyer, presented this last assizes as a recusant in some degree. Farrington is as cunning as he: not anything sounder in religion, though much more subtle to avoid the public note than he. Rigby is as cunning and unsound as either, and as grossly to be detected therein as Halsall." Could the faults of any man escape the eagle eye of such a morality critic? Could one Wiganer sin in secret without Mr. Fleetwood being able to proclaim it on the housetop. The followers of Antichrist, they discovered, were lodging in the very houses of the elect. Those who had been deprived out of their livings, and literally and legally cast out of society, were not despised and avoided as lepers, as they wished them to be. Sincere professors and hypocrites were discovered to prosper no better than temporisers, recusant and avowed Papists. More power was wanted for the arm of the Commission, else the sincere, the discreet, and those full of good purpose had no advantage. Something greater must be done to drive the discontented into the fold. Scorpions must be used for ordinary whips. Zealous gentlemen must be kept in the public service by rewards, and the Nonconformists paid with terrible punishments. But not only were the town and gentry against the severity of Mr. Fleetwood, but the very magistrates

themselves, who ought to have been his coadjutors, stood up against him like a wall of which every man formed a brick. What a persecuted martyr he must have been when he felt that every man's hand was against him. Instead of wavering in the cause, he grew stronger and more determined, for was he not fighting the battles of the Cross, and were his hopes not beyond this earth? In advising the Lord Treasurer who should be of the Commission, he objects to one specially, and pithily gives his opinion of the whole thus:—"One bad man among many, not all good, shall be able to do no small hurt." What garb would Wigan have worn had the Lord Treasurer made Edward Fleetwood, B.D., the Commission!! Although Mr. Fleetwood had withdrawn all confidence from the existing Commission, he yet knew many gentlemen, nearly as sincere and zealous as himself, who could be turned out as excellent and faithful Commissioners, who could not fail to be a terror to the land. Such gentlemen, he says, crowded to the assize courts, eager, no doubt, to hear of wholesale punishments, but went away grieved to find that Nonconformists were as well treated as common felons. Perhaps these gentlemen were young men, for it is a well-known and recognised fact that old men are more sympathetically lenient with the failings of humanity than young men; but Mr. Fleetwood himself was 54 years old, and yet he had no sympathy with convictions opposed to his own. These zealous gentlemen stated upon oath that they had detected 600 recusants, 21 vagrant priests, and "25 notorious houses of receipt for them." This last statement itself proves what a slough of despond Wigan must have been in the eyes of Mr. Fleetwood. The weeds in his baronial garden were more numerous than the flowers, and he was at his wits' end how to uproot them. The magistrates were against him, the inhabitants were harbouring the very priests, the neighbouring gentry were tolerant, and the Commission too lenient; but yet he did not despair. With commendable zeal he perseveres, and in less than five years the Earl of Derby is his openly-avowed friend and ally, after he has been fully convinced by his spy, the seminary, Bell. Here are the reverend gentleman's letters:—

"Fleetwood, Rector of Wigan, to the Lord Treasurer, upon occasion of a new Commission of Justices of Peace for the County of Lancaster; and the good effect thereof.

Rt. Honourable,—Being, by your special good favour, made acquainted with your honourable action concerning the placing and displacing of the justices of the peace in the county of Lancaster, I have thought it my part to advertise you of the sequel thereof, which I might the more fully be able to do. I bestowed my attendance at the assizes, when I perceived in them that stand displaced no small indignation towards those whom they could any ways suspect to have been furtherers, or suppose to be favourers of that honourable action. Wherewith, also, they presumed to possess the Rt. Honourable the Earl of Derby, as of a matter of no small dishonour unto him, and deep discontentment. Whereupon, for the present time and place, I thought good (myself remaining in some part of jealousy with them) in general to lay forth, as occasion served, in the pulpit to their faces that which before I had more particularly delivered to your honour concerning the corrupt state of the whole country, that

every guilty conscience of them might gather up that which was due unto it. Whereof it pleased my lords, the judges, to take so good notice that they delivered the chief points thereof after to the jurors in charge, and the same also more especially recommended to the justices of peace, to be in their continual service regarded. All which so nearly touched the guilty consciences of the discontented sorts, that they began, for the residue of the assizes, to pluck down their high looks, and somewhat better to pacify their discontented minds, and to brook their emulated friends, than before they seemed to do.

After which, immediately, when matters were at the hottest, I also thought good to attend the Rt. Honourable, my very good lord, the Earl of Derby, by way of accustomed duty, which I accordingly did; thereby to give opportunity to his lordship of speech in the premised matters, and myself also to win occasion to lay forth that to his honour concerning the unsoundness of divers of his counsel, as might either fully satisfy his lordship, or at the least clearly justify your honour's most considerate action. But I obtained not one word of the premised matter, though I endeavoured to stir him up thereto by many words on my part, uttered concerning your honour's direction of the ecclesiastical commission; whereat he seemed to have great good liking, and professed his best furtherance thereto. Wherefore, howsoever, the discontented sort (the rather to countenance their discontented state) will seem to cast upon his lordship a prefixed purpose of discontented expostulation; yet I am persuaded, when he shall come in presence with your honour, it will be wholly turned into an honourable request of a most dishonourable matter. Wherein, that your honour should not be narrowly overtaken, as unfurnished of sufficient intelligence, I have with all speed addressed these my letters to your honour, as soon as I understood of the earl his sudden departure towards the Court.

By which to give your honour to understand that, as our state standeth, the satisfaction of his lordship's request, or rather of the suggestion of some evil instruments about him, shall breed not a little inconvenience to your honour, his honour their reformation that are displaced, to the public service, and to the good estate of the sincere professors, both of the commission and of the whole country. For, first, it shall argue your honour's former action of insufficiency; being indeed in all judgment of those that fear God among us, most sincerely, discreetly, and fully to all good purposes accomplished, both for the sincere comfort of the faithful professors of the truth and the rare disparagement of the adversaries thereof in our country. Then it shall not a little nourish in the earl that humour of careless security in tolerating, and no ways soundly reforming, the notorious backwardness of the whole company in religion, and chief of the chiefest about him. In some it shall harden the discontented in their former state of unsoundness. It shall drive the zealous gentlemen from the public service, and settle in the minds of all the true professors an utter despair of any good course of reformation hereafter to be taken in these parts, when they shall see your honour's first acts, and the same of so great importance to their well doing, to receive so speedy and untimely an overthrow. And thereby a main wall, as it were, of corrupt magistrates set up here, at home, among us, against all good directions of your honours hereafter to be made from above. These considerations, Rt. Honourable, have caused me to wish the earl to want in this matter some part of his desire. Whom yet I honour many ways, not unworthily; and so likewise many others, if such there be, that seek to have their private humours of singular sovereignty still nourished with public discommodity. Neither may your honour think that two, or but one, more of his lordship's counsel added (as it were but Mr. Halsall or Mr. Farrington) to the commission, or Mr. Rigby of the quorum, shall work no great prejudice; for one bad man among many, not all good, shall be able to do no small hurt.

Halsall is a lawyer, presented this last assizes as a recusant in some degree. Farrington is as cunning as he; but anything sounder in religion, though much more subtle to avoid the public note than he. Rigby is as cunning and unsound as either, and as grossly to be detected therein as Halsall. All three of them are busy contrivers of dangerous devices against the peace of the ministry and free course of the Gospel, and direct proceeding of justice, in all common opinion, as any that ever bore

authority among us. If there were yet room for any more of his lordship's counsel, it might rather be wished that Mr. Tildesley or Mr. Scarisbrick, gentlemen of best note among the rest for honest and upright dealing in civil matters. But much rather to be wished that his honour would be persuaded to hold himself sufficiently contented with those three of his counsel, and chief about him, which your honour hath already unrequested freely given to his lordship—namely, Sir Peter Lee, Sir Richard Sherborn, and Mr. Rigby, all three of the same affection of the rest: and yet Rigby as discontented, and as presumptuously using his speech against your honour's former proceedings, as any that remain wholly expelled. But it may be that his honour, or some other, the rather to gain their purpose, shall bring in question the state of the present Commission, in respect either of the whole body of the Commissioners or of the particular members thereof.

Wherefore I thought it also most expedient to lay forth unto your honour the sundry observations which I have made in this behalf. First, for the whole body of Commissioners, they are so proportionably allotted to the shire, as our store of sound men would any way afford. Five or four, or three justices, at least, unto every hundred, by means whereof every hundred hath his sufficient magistracy within itself, and every quarter sessions (entertaining the most of them two hundreds) a competent number of justices, and the general assizes a full furnished bench of worshipful gentlemen to countenance and attend that great and honourable service. Which appeared evidently in the eye of all men this late assizes, by the most plentiful concourse of all the gentlemen justices well affected, from all parts of the shire; providing thereby, that neither the common service, specially laid upon them, should be disfurnished of due attendance, nor the discontented sort should obtain any just occasion to argue your honour's direction of insufficiency, or them of any neglect of duty. Where they employed themselves so thoroughly in the cause of religion that there ensued a most plentiful detection of 600 recusants by oath presented, as also the indictment of 87 of them (as many as for the time could be preferred to the jury). And further a notification by oath of 21 vagrant priests usually received in Lancashire, and 25 notorious houses of receipt for them. Such are the manifold commodities which we feel already by your honour's most sound direction. In respect whereof it is of all that desire reformation among us (as justice of her children) most confidently justified.

The only want in general is the want of sound gentlemen in most parts of the country, whereof (I assure myself) they that promote the office against your honour's direction will say little. Hereunto your honour conceived a most apt and necessary supply, namely, the attendances of the justices of Salford hundred at the quarterly sessions of other parts of the country worst affected. To which effect it is given out that your honour hath already sent down letters to the earl, but I fear me his lordship's absence and the sinister emulations of some of his counsel, as, namely, of Mr. Farrington (as I certainly hear) will disappoint them of their due success. Wherefore it was good your honour's more special letters were written to the gentlemen themselves, of whom I doubt not but they shall enjoy a most dutiful acceptance, and a most effectual regard to the great commodity of myself and others that dwell in the most desolate parts of the country, from all goodness and good men.

Then for the particulars, gentlemen, by your honour's more particular direction assigned to this service; as namely, Mr. Warren and Mr. Talbot, most commodiously borrowed of the two countries next adjoining: Mr. Banister and Mr. Hopwood, for their former most approved service, put forward to the quorum: Mr. Wrightington and Mr. Bradshaw, for the special benefit of the ministry, most happily planted in the parts where they both dwell necessarily added; Mr. Langton, Mr. Eccleston, still retained in places most disfurnished of able men for that service; there is no exception to be taken, either for their gentry, livings affections in religion, good discretion, and well-furnished experience for all parts of the services. And so I beseech your honour to rest most resolute upon my poor credit with your honour; which I be easily able to uphold in this matter with your honour, with the most plentiful testimony and censure of my brethren, the preachers of the country, and of the gentlemen best affected in the commission, if your honour require it of me.

In the meantime I shall crave your honour to vouchsafe me your special letters unto them of encouragement and direction, by which they shall not a little be strengthened in the busy charge they have in hand, for the suppressing of many ungodly enormities of the Sabbath, imposed upon them by lords, the justices of assize, at the special instance of myself and some other of my brethren. Where I must not omit to signify unto your honour the special good countenance I enjoyed at their lordships' hands; being indeed the more favourably bestowed upon me, as upon special notice they had some way taken, and there openly professed of your honour's good favour toward me; whereupon, I suppose, your honour shall gather convenient occasion to make your honourable good liking of their effectual proceedings this last assizes in the cause of religion to appear unto them. Whereby, no doubt, they shall receive no small encouragement to continue the same hereafter, to the great comfort of the true professors and faithful preachers. For the which I shall not cease to be thankful to the Lord, with all my brethren of the ministry, by which we shall enjoy a most sound means of thankfulness to your honour.

Concerning my proceedings with the commission ecclesiastical, I have, according to your honour's directions, wholly possessed Mr. Solicitor therewith. And he further required of me and Mr. Goodman a full advertisement of our manifold enormities which, by mutual conference with all my brethren, I have readily furnished, and against the next week to attend the bishop and Mr. Solicitor by their appointment. I fear nothing therein but my Lord of Darby his discontinuance, lest it breed some inconvenient delays. But your honour's continual presence and ready mind shall work us, I trust in the Lord, a more speedy despatch.

Thus commending my humble duty to your honour, and your soul and spirit and body to the most comfortable presence of Christ's spirit in you now and for ever, I humbly take my leave.

From Wigan, the 7 day of September, 1587.

Your honour's most bounden in the Lord,

EDWARD FLEETWODDE, Pastor of Wigan."

The house of Lord Derby was the resort of the *elite* of the land, learned and grave. There there were intellectual feasts, rational amusements, and a hospitality not exceeded by that of any house in Britain. There was philosophy for the wise, a fool to amuse the melancholy, the flower of English chivalry, and the beauty of the land. Intellectual advancement was as much fostered there as in any monastery in England. The Derby family was one of the richest, and now it was at its zenith, although immediately afterwards lawsuits and hospitality threatened to overwhelm it, as if it were the very fate of greatness to be most easily overturned when perched on the pinnacle of glory. The best tutors that could be found were appointed to superintend the education of the Derby family, and the sons of wealthy peers shared the instruction, so that it was a college of the very highest class. The earl's chaplain in the 29th Elizabeth was the Rev. William Leigh, B.D., who was for fifty-six years rector of Standish (1583-1639). In his time the Grammar School of Standish was founded and endowed with £300, given by Mrs. Mary Langton, widow. Mr. Leigh died in the eighty-ninth year of his age, and was buried in the chancel of Standish Church. Several sermons were written and published by him, the best of which is a funeral sermon, called "The Soul's Solace against Sorrow," from which the following is an extract:—

"Well! she is gone! and now behold her seate is empty and her grave is full, and methinkes for the present we feel her want on earth, whom God hath found in Heaven—our prayers lesse powerfull, our preaching lesse precious, our psalmes lesse powerfull and melodious on her behalfe. For you all know that there she sate and there she sung, there she read and there she prayed, there she heard the Word, there she received the sacraments, there lately she lived, and there now she is dead; therefore may I say with the Prophet (Isai. xl. 6) all flesh is grasse, and all the grace thereof as the flowers of the field; but comfort yourselves in hope of a joyfull resurrection, as also in respect of her holy life, blessed end, and most happy state in glorie, and sith she is gone, let it be remembered as a sacrament of her rest that she went upon a day of rest, one of the chiefest of Sabbaths, and high Feast of Pentecost (31st May, 1601, set 22); even then that she should ascend when the Holy Ghost did descend, by which Spirit she was sealed up to the day of redemption. Worshipfully was she descended, but most honourably (may I now say) is she ascended; yet behold the husband mourneth, for he hath lost his wife; the mother mourneth, for she hath lost a daughter; the brother mourneth, for he hath lost a sister, which is, methinks, not much unlike the mourning of Hadadramon in the Valley of Megiddon (Zack. xii., 2). And yet this is not all, for we preachers may mourne most, for that we have lost an auditor who heard with reverence, felt with passion, and followed with perseverance. But, beloved, what we have lost Heaven hath found, and the holy angells rejoice at the gain; in the meantime the Lord of Heaven supplie the want upon earth, and increase the number of faithful professors, *in Sionis gaudium et Anglo-Papistarum luctum.* Amen. Amen."

One of the gentlemen of the best calling in the hundred of Derby, in the county of Lancaster, was Miles Gerard, who had recently married a daughter of Sir Thomas Hesketh, of Rufford, knight. He exerted himself much in the time of the dreaded invasion of the Spaniards, and, besides being a captain of a regiment, he raised 200 soldiers from the neighbourhood of Wigan in 1557 for the public service. He was Sheriff of Lancashire in 1553 and 1558, and M.P. for the county in 1563.—(Stanley Papers, Harl. MSS., 2219, p. 19 b.) Though thus approved and rewarded as a good and loyal subject, neither he nor his family were exempted from the religious persecutions of the time. Judging from the information lodged against him there must have been a constant watch on all his movements. In 1593 he was brought to trial, with other recusants, before Lord Derby, as a suspected person, on the charge of Mr. Bell. He was accused of receiving and relieving several seminary priests at his own house. He had given them shelter, food, and, in some cases, provided them liberally with money, yet confessed that he himself had never taken the oath of allegiance as required by law, and that although he had neither gone to Church, nor taken the Sacrament for seven years, owned that he was willing to do all required by law. The lord keeper, Puckering, collected the following information concerning him:—"Miles Gerard, of Ince, Esq., charged by Mr. Bell to have received and lodged divers seminary priests at his house, namely, Norden, Blackwel, Gardiner, Fourth, Hughs, Hardwyte, Dakins, Butler, and Bell, alias Burton. His brother a seminary, to whom he gave 30s. and another time 40s. and after sent him £10 to Wisbich, and to another brother of his Saith, he hath frequented the church these seven years, but hath not received the communion; but desireth

therein respite and conference, hoping he shall conform himself. That he never took the oath of allegiance, according to the statute, but is willing to take it, if it be tendered."—(Strype Annals, vol. IV., p. 261, A.D. 1593).

Many prisoners are men of the highest intellectual ability, but by a wrongful education their gifts, which might have distinguished them amongst the highest ornaments of the land, or ranked them with the most useful members, have only brought them down to be specially distinguished for crime. So, too, all good and great inventions used for illegitimate purposes may become great instruments of evil. Thus the printing press was put to libellous and treasonable uses at this period. The fifth Earl of Derby, Lord Lieutenant of Lancashire, was apprised of a press being carried from town to town in his county, whose owners were printing and spreading libels and seditious in every town. It was illegal to have such a machine, much more so was it to print such broadsheets. He searched for it in Wigan, Warrington, Manchester, and other places, and captured both it and its owners in Manchester. The owners who were found in possession of the seditious song printed by them, "Ha' ye any more work for the Cooper," were imprisoned and the press destroyed (1588).

Lord Derby was a great and influential man and an honest, although bigoted, one. His house, as already stated, was the college for the sons of the neighbouring gentry, whom he entertained in princely fashion with feasts for body and mind. He paid strolling players to amuse his guests, and kept a fool in motley—Henry—for the fun of all and sundry. He was a good husband, a strict and yet indulgent father, a sagacious politician, a good man, and yet, with his own right honourable hand, he unwittingly confesses a sad weakness. He kept a spy, Bell by name, who unravelled for him, whilst he pretended to be uninterested in local affairs, the religious conditions of the district. He had fully come round to the views of Fleetwood, and was now as ardent for power to persecute as the shepherd of the flock himself. He knew then, from his spy, the whereabouts of many Papists and temporisers, but pretended to be indifferent to their ways until he should have a better opportunity and stronger power to bring home their guilt and punish their stubbornness. He was anxious to draw to certain conviction, and, as when the huntsman betrays the game by decoy-ducks, he seemed to give them full liberty that they might grow bolder and expose themselves to certain detection and destruction. He longed for a "sudden receipt" of legal power to perform a better piece of service. In his religious sincerity he complains of the growing blindness of the people that leads them to Papistry and Puritanism, but good, far-seeing man he does not blame so much as pity the ignorant poor, who, he believes, are led on by "the backwardness and deep dissimulation of the principals," whom he longs to number with the dead. He

further complains of the leniency of the Commission and its powers, as well as of the enormities of backsliders, and then he finishes with a testimonial to Mr. Fleetwood, whose character is all that the nation or Church could wish for. Action was food for his zeal. How great are the satisfaction and honest pride of the detective when he brings to the bar of justice the perpetrator of some mysterious deed. Pecuniary rewards are as nothing. To be recognised by the learned judges as clever, and acknowledged by the public as a valuable acquisition to the State, are the laurels of his profession. Yet he only performs that duty for which he is paid. Were his discoveries the results of his hobby, how much greater would his elation be. Lord Derby was a religious judge upon principle: to detect immorality was his hobby: to capture a guilty conscience was his crowning glory: to bind, hand and foot, and arraign before justice, all evil-doers, dissemblers, temporisers, recusants, and non-church goers, were the proofs of his Christianity and the glory of his life. Fanaticism and love of glory goaded him on. The narrow opinions of Calvin were the foundations of his creed: the golden law had not been discovered in his edition of the New Testament. His intentions were good, but his creed was false, and the result of his ardent labours, although bringing ruin to the immediate subjects of persecution, utterly failed in their object. Here is an example of the zealot's work:—

"A note of the evidence of all the prisoners for Popery in the several counties; as the lord keeper Puckering collected, and writ it down for and against the persons hereafter named. So endorsed by his own hand; anno 1593."

"Humphrey Cartwright, of Warrington, in Lancashire, scholar, of the age of 47. Committed to prison in Manchester nine years by the Earl of Derby. Thence brought up to the Counter in Wood-street, in which he remained about a year for recusancy. Indicted at Manchester. Hath neither lands nor goods. Knew Bell, a seminary priest, in Lancashire. Did help him to say mass at Mr. Stopford's house in Lancashire, who was dead. Saw Mr. Michee, a seminary priest, in Lancashire: one Baret, a priest, at Mr. Whitmore's house in Cheshire. Met one Brian, a seminary priest, in Fetter-lane, and one Lloid, in Fleet-street. But never relieved any of them. Refuseth to come to church. Never had conference with any preacher since his imprisonment; neither doth he desire it."—(Strype Annals, vol. IV., p. 261, A.D. 1593).

When Derby had once put his hand to the plough there was neither halting, looking behind, nor doing things by halves. The fire of his wrathful zeal had taken nearly five years to kindle into a public blaze, but now it was like a wide-flaring flame, and woe to the Papists, public and secret, whether they were on his own estates, in the Standishgate, or back hovels of Wigan, or in Scholes. The sword of the

Lord was in his hand, and all he longed for was extended legal power to suppress the heretics. Wigan and its neighbourhood had always been a stronghold of Papists, but now they were so numerous as to be bold enough often to declare themselves openly, regardless of the purgers, Derby and Fleetwood. Lord Derby gave a full account of the debased condition of ungodly Wigan and neighbourhood to the Lords of the Privy Council, and besought extended power from them. To further the success of his wish he made Fleetwood the bearer of his letter, with a testimonial of strong commendation, and advising them to believe every word he said. To make assurance doubly sure, he gave a copy of this urgent letter, accompanied by another letter, strongly commending the bearer, the same Mr. Fleetwood, to be delivered, along with his fuller discourse on the contents, to Sir Thomas Heneage, Vice-Chamberlain and Chancellor of the Duchy. The result of such a powerfully combined appeal was that Lord Derby had his zealous request granted, so he set about his work with a well-prepared appetite. He acted like an eager master of the hounds, who not only does his duty well, but enjoys the sport; yet was his zeal genuine, for he believed he was doing God good service. The brave ones who dared him openly to do his worst were first taken, and "their appearance dispensed withal for a time for good purpose," whilst the timid and those who valued their lives and liberty hid themselves in terror and dismay. He had spies everywhere, dwelling even "in corrupt places" of the town, who bound themselves by oath to discover them. Persecution, as a natural consequence, made hypocrites of many honest men. Many put on the garb of conformity for the sake of peace and security. There were thousands of wolves in sheep's clothing. Many who believed not in the justice of the law conformed to its letter, but had no faith in the spirit of its creed. Suspected persons were persecuted to death, and rich men robbed of their estates, while hypocrisy and sycophancy sat in high places, protected by law, ready to change their opinions at the earliest convenience.

The zeal of Lord Derby, the newly-avowed accomplice of Fleetwood, cannot be better described than by his own letters. Therein he owns that he has been stealthily waiting for an opportunity of distinguishing himself. He has a thorough understanding of the emergency of the times, but is as wise as a serpent, if not as harmless as a dove. From his own "experience and knowledge" he knows the information given by his spy is true, but he forbears to deal against the Papists until the Lords of the Privy Council, to whom his letter is written, are prepared to give him unlimited licence to pounce on the unsuspecting temporisers or avowed Romanists, and that purposely that they may be unwarily committed by their own actions. He continues to lament the backslidings and blindness of the people, and their neglect towards God and her Majesty, but still wisely and sympathetically acquits the

poorer and more ignorant classes of people, as he believes they are led astray by their designing leaders. He ends his letter with a most favourable reference to Mr. Fleetwood, whom he believes to be a discreet and *painful* labourer in the Church of God:—

“To the Lords of the Privy Council.

May it please your lordships,—Since I despatched Bell, the seminary, I have well considered of that he revealed. And, forasmuch as by mine own experience and knowledge of the party, I conceive that many of his informations be true, and that a number of those whom he chargeth are either known Papists to the world, or at best temporisers, keeping in their houses those that are badly given, I have thought meet hereby to signify that my opinion to your lordships, and to let you know that, in hope of your like conception of the information, I still, expecting some round direction of proceedings from your lordships, have foreborne hitherto to deal much against the Papists, on purpose only to draw them into a doubtless and secure mind of troubles, to the end I might, upon a sudden receipt of your lordship's direction, perform a better piece of service than I should if I had stirred much in this meantime. For in vain it were to have attempted any matter or service of importment immediately upon Bell's sending up.

Nevertheless, forasmuch as your lordships see by our last certificate the great relapse of the people into blindness, and neglect of their duties towards God and her Majesty, which cometh to pass only by means of the backwardness and deep dissimulation of the principals, whom the meaner sort follow. And thus you perceive well by Bell's information the inclination of sundry of calling. As also that those who stand out as recusants do shift and convey themselves away, so as they cannot be met withal.

I will spare to trouble your lordships with mine opinion of mine own, but leave all to your grave considerations, nothing doubting but your lordships will devise such remedies for the suppressing of these enormities, and presumptions of continuance of lenity, as shall stand with God's laws, the safety of her Majesty, and the quiet of the whole commonwealth. Praying also your lordships to credit this gentleman, Mr. Fleetwood, parson of Wigan, a discreet and painful labourer in the Church of God, who can truly make known unto your lordships upon demand the state of this country, and private affection of the most persons of account, and so commending your lordships and your labours in the direction of God's holy spirit, do end.

Your lordship's assured loving friend, and at commandment,

H. DERBY.

New Park, my house, this 30th of Octob., 1592.”

“The Earl of Derby to Sir Tho. Heneage, Vice-Chamberlain, and Chancellor of the Duchy. With a copy of the former letter to the Council enclosed. The bearer, Mr. Fleetwood, Parson of Wigan, Papists, temporisers many.

Sir,—Albeit I well know my letter to your lordships will come to your hand, yet to the end you may be the better armed to further my intent, which is to have the presumption of public and secret Papists, being temporisers, suppressed, here enclosed to send you a copy thereof, being well assured that, answerable to the hope of all well given subjects in these parts, you will effectually further the good of the Church and the suppression of the maligners thereof. For any particulars touching that sort of this county, this bearer, Mr. Fleetwood, Parson of Wigan, a discreet and learned preacher, can inform you truly, whom you may believe. And so with my heartiest commendations do end, wishing to you as to myself,

Your assured loving friend, always faithfully to use,

H. DERBY.

New Park, my house, the 30th of Oct., 1592.”

"The Earl of Derby to the Lord Treasurer, that upon the directions of the lords he was in prosecution of the recusants.

My very honourable good lord,—What success your lordship's very grave directions (which I assure your lordship have much revived and comforted all well given subjects here) have taken will appear by my letter to your lordship and Mr. Wand's reports, who, having been an eye-witness of all proceedings, hath carried himself very discreetly, and with great diligence in the service. The which, although it hath been hindered by such means as are set down in my letter, yet within a short time, and upon the sudden, when all things be quieted, I hope will appear to effect some good service in the apprehending of Jesuits, seminaries, and such like traitorous persons. The rather by intelligence and help of those whose appearance there is dispensed withal for a time for a good purpose, who by bond and oath (dwelling in corrupt places) have undertaken to discover them.

And so, nothing doubting but your lordship will further the continuance of these well-begun proceedings, I do commit your lordship and your labours to the direction of God's holy spirit.

Your lordship's assured loving friend,

Always faithful to use,

H. DERBY.

New Park, my house, the 27 of Novemb., 1592."

A new religious sect took origin at this time, that of the Quakers, many of whom lived in Wigan. Their manner of living was as different as possible from either of the two great contending parties.

Notwithstanding the peculiarities of the sect of Quakers or Friends, they have great principles and good habits that might advantageously be studied or followed by the community at large. They act upon the principle that life is too short for frivolity and too precious to be wasted in war. They are unostentatious and orderly in behaviour, kind to one another, and consider it a duty to help the distressed and provide for their families. They all engage in some trade, and their word is their bond. Statistics prove that their quiet manner of living is conducive to longevity, and in their Assurance Societies a smaller premium is paid on a life policy than has to be paid by other life assurers, simply because statistics prove they live longer, and therefore must pay longer.

Now was the time for the invincible Jesuits to prosper. They were to be found at every tavern and squire's house. There were many of them in Wigan. It was their rule to be all things to all men, so that they could prosper their cause. Their lives were devoted or consecrated to the cause of Catholicism. They were to trade with tradesmen, dine with princes, or beg with beggars, as occasion required or opportunity offered. They were Catholics with Catholics and Puritans with Puritans. All the principles in them were to sink into insignificance before the one principle of working for the Papal Church. They were to become the lowdest of the low or the very slaves of licentiousness in the cause of their Church. Their mission was pointed out to them, and in the face of death itself—which to them would be a martyr's death—they were to fight their way and conquer or die. There were Jesuits in Wigan and Jesuits in Derby's house. Father Holt was one of Derby's men, who

did all in his power, with the offer of 40,000 Spanish ducats, to get York to assassinate Queen Elizabeth, or even if he would assist in doing so (1595).—(Stanley Papers, part II., notes, page 180).

It was natural that such an enthusiast as Mr. Fleetwood should make many bitter enemies. Enthusiasm was no palliation for what many worthy persons considered crime, for all those whom he persecuted as heretics believed that he and those of his faith were the real heretics, and they themselves the true believers. By them he was accounted the great persecutor of those of the true Catholic faith—worse than a Jew, Turk, or infidel—aye, even worse than Judas himself. Whether as private revenge or from a feeling of religious duty, many of his own parishioners would gladly have seen him brought to the gibbet or stake, although their vengeance seems to have been satisfied by simply plying him with threatening letters. The following is a copy of a small note left for him in his own pew in the Parish Church about the year 1596 (Harl. Coll. Codex, 286):—

“I.H.S.

Edward Fleetwood, parson of Wigan, I heire of yor Invious Hereticall words againste our Feathe that I canot stay my pen from writing vnto youe to commande youe to leaffe blasfeminge againste thees our Catholike Feath, or eles yow will drink of Joudas sope, moreover if yor hereticall mind will not be stayed against or Feathe I must nide accounte yow worse then the Revinge Soulderse than Persequed Christe, for they would never stint vtell they had Christ for to persecut him, therefore I must nide account yow one of these becaue you will never stint vtell that you have persecuted the poore Catholicke. And again it is very onnaturall a speretual man so to forswere himself in so indetinge so many of yor town wiche ar as good Goers to the Churche as you are, therefore I must nide Account you worse than Jou, or turks, or Infideile. I worse then a doupe thinge In so For swer Ringe yor self, I if tyme and plase did so requer I could so proff it therfor Rest with this and be contented, and I will writ vnto you her After.

G. C.

Indorsed,

Lre incerepted Pap.”

The burgesses determined that the town should not be despised by foreigners, whose business brought them hither. The Court Leet specially investigated the condition of taverns and hotels, for it was seemingly a common complaint that strangers had bad accommodation in them, as if the landlords were eager only to grasp the stranger's money without concerning themselves about the comfort of the guests. Where ale was sold it was generally understood that beds could be had, and often the weary stranger sat imbibing his refreshing glass, and only inquired for his place of repose when too late to go farther abroad, and, rather than stir out, would huddle his languid body in any out-of-the-way corner. To prevent such inhospitable abuse the court directed that no ale should be sold where four men and four horses could not be accommodated, and thus the hotel accommodation was so much improved that the town became noted for its good inns. In all the taverns of Wigan, and

there were not a few, a custom prevailed at this period which afterwards gave rise to one of the most common and expressive proverbial sayings still existing in our own time. The habit, of course, was not confined to Wigan. Drinking-cups were made of horn or wood, and when a jovial party went into a tavern it was neither the wish of the company to have, nor was it in the power of the landlord to give, each individual a cup. To drink out of the same flowing bowl was considered a token of sincere friendship: to refuse so to drink was a declaration of enmity. There was a vertical row of pegs at regular intervals on the cup, each distance representing a certain share of the entire liquor. To each drinker was allotted the portion between one peg and another, as the loving-cup passed round each drained his draught by bringing the contents down a peg—a feat that old cronies could accomplish to a nicety by one great gulp—and thus gave rise to the common saying, “Bring him down a peg,” applied to conceits who aim at riding the high horse.

In 1585 William Banks purchased the estates of Winstanley Hall, which remained in possession of his direct male heirs until 1800. The Winstanleys of Winstanley were first mentioned in 43 Edward III. The pedigree is among the Harleian MSS. and Visitations. One of the last of the Winstanley Hall family on record was one of the poor Windsor knights. The hall was rebuilt in 1618 (Gregson). Peter Leigh, member for Wigan in 1586-7, was the son-in-law of Sir Gilbert Gerard, and owned the estates of Bradley and Haydock, in Lancashire, and Lyme, in Cheshire. He was knighted in 1598, represented Cheshire in 1601, and died 17th February, 1636.

CHAPTER XIII.

Monasteries and Grammar Schools—Wigan Scholars of the 10th Century—Wigan Grammar School Wranglers—Old Documents connected with the Wigan Grammar School—Old Head Masters and Ushers—The Masters Publicly Admonished—Salaries—First Wigan Bookseller—A Bookseller's Petition—The Mayor and Aldermen of 1613—Foundation of the Grammar School—The Bequest of 1596 to the School—Wigan Charities—The Mayor and the School—Lynacre's Library—Subjects Taught—Schoolmasters—School Life—Book of Sports—Petition of the Inhabitants against Abuses in Grammar School—Rules and Regulations.

MONASTERIES had been established all over the country in quiet, secluded glens, in their own extensive demesnes, and in the busy towns. Their cloisters were the only important schools and colleges: their monks were the friends of the poor and the schoolmasters of the rich. Although the sons of noblemen received their primary education from private tutors, youths generally were only educated with a view to entering the Church, and the students were scribes or clerks, who, in the *Scriptorium*, or writing-room, spent the greater part of their time writing, on parchment whose borders they beautifully designed and illuminated, portions of Scripture or classics, which were sold at a very great price. There were few grammar schools before the Reformation. Although the exact date of the foundation of the Wigan Grammar School is unknown, it certainly did not exist in 1536 as a grammar school, for there were then only three in the county, viz., Farnworth (1507), Manchester (1515), Warrington (1526). Nevertheless, prior to this, there was in Wigan, just beside the walls and on the site of the first grammar school, a scholastic institution, apparently of no mean repute, called the Wigan College. From 1536 to 1539 no less than 3,219 religious edifices and scholastic establishments, raised by cunning artificers, were laid in ruins; but whether it was at this time or before that the Wigan College was destroyed cannot be ascertained, but one thing is certain, that its ruins were still to be seen in the reign of Henry VII., at which time Wigan, then one of the best and most prosperous towns in the county, was without a school, or, at least, a proper school-house.

In all likelihood the Wigan College had been a prosperous school, and no doubt its destruction or disuse was much felt. Several Wiganers, at this period, purely on account of their previous education, were holding high positions in the learned world, and two promising lads from Wigan were registered on the rolls of the Merchant Taylors' School, London, although they may have been nominated by mercantile relatives who had successfully established themselves in the metropolis; yet, according to the school rules, they must first have passed a satisfactory preliminary examination. One of the most distinguished lawyers of his time was Sir Gilbert Gerard, the favourite Master of the Rolls and Attorney-General of Queen Elizabeth. James Gerard, of Ince, was his father. He was M.P. for Wigan in 1553, knight of the shire in 1585, and died 4th February, 1592-3. John Woolton, or Wolton, Bishop of Exeter, mentioned elsewhere, was a Wigan boy, who entered at Brasenose College, Oxon, when he was eighteen years of age (1553). The books at the school of the Merchant Taylors have these entries of admission:—

1587. May 31. Hugh Bullock, son of John, of Wigan, co. Lanc., husbandman.

1649. Ralph Walker, eldest son of Ralph Walker, of Holland, in parish of Wiggan, co. Lanc., yeoman, born 2nd June, 1639.—(MS. at Sion College, London).

Of the pupils in the Wigan Grammar School who have most distinguished themselves at college have been Mr. Cowling and Mr. Finch, who was each in his year senior wrangler.

The Mayor of Wigan in 1613 was Peter Marsh, and the twelve aldermen were the Earl of Derby, Sir Thomas Gerard, Knt., Sir T. Holcroft, Knt., Roger Bradshaw, Miles Gerard, James Banks, William Banks, William Forde, Ed. Chaloner, William Gardiner, Humphrey Matthew, and Robert Barrow. In the same year the Grammar School was built and endowed, although it certainly had been founded before that date, and was only then privileged with special school premises, or re-built. In all likelihood what had formerly been styled the Wigan College had resolved itself into the Wigan Free Grammar School. The earliest extant document in connection with it is written in contracted Latin, which is almost illegible. It is dated 1596. After the destruction of the monasteries and the introduction of printing the want of education was much felt. Books were, comparatively speaking, plentiful, but few were able to read them. Men who had acquired wealth, and knew the great drawbacks consequent on being uneducated, endowed or contributed to the endowment of schools for the education of deserving poor, where, at the same time, others might be educated on payment of fees. Printing was introduced into England in the reign of Edward IV. by William Caxton, who himself wrote or translated and printed not less than sixty works, so that for over a hundred years the craving for acquiring the art of reading had been steadily and rapidly

growing. Schools were established all over the country, and in 1613 the first Grammar School proper was built and endowed in Wigan by Banks, Bullock, and Mollineaux, and some feoffees of the town. The foundation of Wigan Grammar School is generally ascribed to James Leigh, who certainly gave money for its support in 1619, but in his deed the school is distinctly spoken of as an already existing institution, to the funds of which he added his contribution. The donations to the school at this period were very considerable, but altogether inadequate to make a substantial endowment. All deeds and testimonies tend to prove that it was in existence during the sixteenth century, but the actual date of its foundation is a mere conjecture. There is no mention made of it amongst the documents concerning the old Lancashire Grammar Schools, now in the Corpus Christi College, Oxford; but this is no proof of its non-existence, for even of some schools, which certainly did then exist, no mention is made. The bequest in 1596 was a messuage of land in Aspull, named Backshaw, or Backshaigh, by James Banks, Esq., of Winstanley, to Francis Sherrington, of Worsley. The latter gentleman, by deed dated 1597, passed over the same property for the benefit of the Grammar School to the Mayor, William Gardiner, and other gentlemen, as trustees. To these trustees for a nominal sum he "did grant, confirm, and deliver" a yearly rent of 53 shillings and fourpence for the benefit of the Grammar School. This estate contained 15 acres 2 roods of land, which were sold in 1812 to Robert Holt Leigh, Esq., of Whitley, for £2,930 7s., which was paid the governors of the school, together with the expenses for obtaining the special Act of Parliament required, making the sum total paid to the governors £3,796. These documents of 1596-97, which I have seen, do not mention these properties as about to be given for the benefit of the Grammar School, but as the acknowledged possessions of an established and recognised school. On this Grammar School document of 1596, by the way, is the name William Gardiner, mayor; further back than this no mayor is known. There is in the present school a long black oak school-desk, rudely carved by many an idle pupil or neglected genius, bearing the inscription by a skilled carver, "1616. James Ford, Mayor." James Ford was mayor in that year, and the likelihood is that this desk—being a school-desk—was purposely made as a gift for the Grammar School, perhaps, because James Ford himself was an old Grammar School boy, and was justly proud of being so. There were in all eleven gentlemen of this family mayors of Wigan, but in the churchwarden's accounts, and in other documents where I have seen their signatures, the name is invariably spelled *fforde*.

One of the oldest documents which I have seen amongst those in the possession of the governors of the Grammar School is dated 12th October, 39th Elizabeth (1597). It is an indenture, in which the lands and other possessions then actually belonging to

the school, and not then for the first time being acquired, are specified. It is chiefly valuable as a relic which proves that the school actively existed in the sixteenth century. Of this early period nothing but deeds and indentures remain. No books seem to have been kept. The receipts and disbursements of that time are unknown, perhaps because the governors, like the churchwardens, could not write. The minute book of the feoffees or governors, which contains some interesting local information, is only preserved from 1650. These meetings seem only to have taken place when a master or usher was required. The salary of the upper master was £30, increased to £48 a year, with a house and other perquisites, which amounted to very little; the under master or usher received £10 a year. With a slight digression from chronological order, the names of a dozen of the early masters are here given. On the death of the head-master, Henry ffelden, the first master named in the minute books, Samuel Shawe was elected on May 27th, 1676. Sam was a noted character—not for drunkenness, which was the common failing of schoolmasters in times which are not yet ancient—but for his abilities as teacher, scholar, and citizen. He was honoured and revered by his pupils, and held in the very highest esteem by the feoffees and inhabitants. He had the *gift* of eccentricity, then considered a sign of true genius. He knew he was a scholar, and was proud of it. He was the Rev. Samuel Shawe. He knew he was esteemed in the town, and longed for an opportunity to prove he was worthy of admiration and an honour to the town of his adoption. Never maiden wished for a silk gown who did not at least obtain a sleeve of it, and Samuel Shawe saw his opportunity—his tide of fortune—in the visit of the bishop. He wrote a Latin poem of welcome, after the manner of the modern address. All the inhabitants knew what the scholar had done, and, dressed all in their best, they escorted in procession their highly delighted pedagogue to meet the approaching ecclesiastical dignitary. The bishop was pleased and surprised—for he so expressed himself in a letter written immediately afterwards—at the dramatic recitation and reception, and Shawe from that moment became a burghal god, for the inhabitants, of course, knew little of the qualities of the poem, and, therefore, admired it all the more. The head mastership of the Warrington Grammar School became vacant in 1686. Shawe's fame and ability were known there, and he was elected on the 16th March of the same year, and with the best wishes of the whole town for his welfare he left Wigan, and John Sumpner was appointed in his stead. He was master for seven years, during which time Richard Highfield was his usher. On the 5th August, 1692, James Liptrott was appointed to the mastership, and Thomas Ashurst was made usher, or master of the lower school. On the 16th June, 1694, two new masters were elected—Richard Duckworth, as head-master, and John Weaver, as usher. The

feoffees in 1710 came to the conclusion that Mr. Duckworth was too old and infirm to continue his duties, and at a public meeting it was resolved, with his consent, that another should be appointed. Mr. Shawe, of Warrington, was not yet forgotten, and the feoffees requested him to examine the candidates, and choose a master for them. At his recommendation William Ashburne was elected. A new usher, John Hooton, was chosen to assist him on November 5th, 1729. He was under-master for nineteen years—until his death. Richard Guest was then appointed for “the space of six months from the date hereof (13th April, 1748), and for such further time as he shall behave himself to the satisfaction of the said feoffees, or the major portion of them.” Mr. John Cowley succeeded William Ashburne as head-master on the 27th July, 1732. He was master until he died, 1753. Then, for the first time, a master was advertised for in the public papers—the “Generall Evening Post,” and in the Chester, Manchester, and Preston weekly papers. There were three candidates, including the usher, Mr. Richard Guest, who had had five years’ experience in the school. The other candidates were the head-masters of the schools in Waverham and Ormskirk. Mr. Samuel Robinson, of Ormskirk, was appointed 31st Dec., 1753.

On the 14th October of the following year James Acton was appointed usher, in place of Mr. Guest, resigned. The conduct of both masters was complained of by the inhabitants, and an indignation meeting of the feoffees was held in the New Town Hall, June 10th, 1760, “to consider of the complaints made by many of the inhabitants against Mr. Samuel Robinson and Mr. James Acton for breach of neglect of duty.” The *fifthly* resolution was—“That the head-master and usher have been guilty of a breach of the 15th statute by detaining the scholars in the school in the morning and former part of the day, till sometimes twelve or sometimes one of the clock, before they were dismissed to dinner, which occasioned great trouble and anxiousness to the parents and their family, and we order that the scholars shall not for the future be allowed to be absent from school, in order to go home to breakfast, as has been usual.” *Sixthly*—“That the head-master and usher be admonished by the feoffees of the school, that they do not for the future act contrary to the statutes of the school in any of the instances above mentioned, or otherwise, under pain of our displeasure.” This minute is signed Alex. Leigh, Mayor, and followed by the signatures of seven other feoffees. A note is appended, dated 11th June, 1760:—“The said schoolmaster and usher were this day admonished by the said feoffees, as above mentioned, in the presence of John Pennington, Town Clerk.”

Mr. Robinson resigned, and was succeeded on 7th July, 1764, by the Rev. William Stopford, of Salford; and on the 25th May, 1765, Mr. Stopford was succeeded by Mr. Page Godfrey. Great changes were contemplated in 1771 by the feoffees; on the 2nd of January of that year they reduced the salary of the head-master from £48 to

£40 a year, and added the deducted £8 to the usher's salary, so that he afterwards received £18 a year. On the 4th of March in the same year the Mayor and feoffees "do order, limit, and appoint that, for the future, no preference shall be given to any master, or bachelor of arts, graduate or under-graduate of Oxford or Cambridge, or other university whatsoever, and that all persons whatsoever shall for the future have an equal right to offer themselves as candidates for the said school." At that very same meeting they appointed as head-master the Rev. Mr. John Bennett, of Astley, M.A. Two years afterwards, 15th May, 1773, the Rev. Mr. John Croudson, of Winwick, was elected master.—(Old Minute Books in the possession of the Clerk to the Governors of Wigan Grammar School).

In the early days of the Grammar School there was no bookseller in the town. The few books required were kept in stock by the head master, the profits from which formed part of his perquisites. The first bookseller in Wigan was Edward Rigby, who in 1685 requested and obtained permission to commence that trade. His original petition to the Mayor, &c., and the reply is preserved in an interesting collection of similar petitions:—

"To the Worpth the Maior, Aldermen, Recorder, and Counsell of the Towne and Burough of Wigan, in the County of Lancaster. These :

The humble petition of Edward Rigby, of Wigan aforesaid,
Sheweth :

That the Petition^r having beene freeman of the said Town for the space of twenty years last past or thereabouts, and your petio^r humbly considering that to sell Books within the said towne may not onely tend to the advantage of y^r Petio^r. But be serviceable to the neighbourhood.

Humbly begs the favor of yo^r W^{pp}s to sell Books within the said Towne and Burrough, and yo^r Petioⁿ will ever pray, &c.

The following answer of the jury, in different handwriting, was given to the petition:—

Wee grant the pet^r to sell Bookes to the free Grammar Schools of Wigan such books as shall be (*) Mr. Sumpner, Schoolm^r. there the time or (in ?) value (*) thirty shillings in Books, &c.—(* Here the MS. is destroyed.)

The following petition in connection with the same trade is taken direct from the minute book of the Court Leet for 1742:—

To the Worshipfull John Marckland, Gentleman, Mayor of Wigan, in the County of Lancaster and to the Alderman and Jury at the Court Leet there assembled, the fifth day of October, 1742.

The Humble Petition of Wm. Stewart, Son of James Stewart, of Ormskirk, in the County of Lancaster, Bookseller,

Sheweth :

That your Petitioner has served an Apprentisship with his said Father, and been well Educated in buying Books, papers, and all sorts things in the way and business of a Bookseller and Stationer; has been informed that such a person is much wanted in this your Corporation. Promises that he will deal honestly and fairly with his customers, sell his goods at reasonable rates and prices, has no family, and is in good Circumstances.

Therefore your Petitioner humbly prays you Gentlemen of Jury that you would be pleased to elect him a freeman of this your Corporation, he being willing to pay such sum of money for his freedom as you shall think proper.

And your Petitioner, as in duty bound, shall ever pray, &c

The verdict of the jury was:—

We elect him a Freeman of this Corporation, he paying Five pounds Five shillings in a Month's time to the present Bailiffs.

The modern charities of Wigan are few and far between, although by no means insignificant. The burgesses of the middle ages were as philanthropic in their life, and as benevolent by their last wills and testaments, as the burgesses of any Lancashire town, when compared with the urban prosperity. In many cases the charities were small, but even then they were no mean moiety of the testator's "estates," and, besides, Wigan property has not increased to fabulous prices, as in many other towns. For a long period, during the very best commercial modern times of this country, Wigan had its full share of profitable monetary concerns, but the local government was neither energetic nor ambitious, and whilst other less prosperous towns with aspiring councils were not only beautifying their towns, enlarging their commercial facilities, and attending to the sanitary laws, but increasing their means of production, Wigan was content to make money, live up to its income, without enlarging or even securing the prosperity of the future. It was satisfied to reap abundantly without sowing generously. Because the unanimous public spirit was faint-hearted, wealth was heaped into the laps of a few capitalists, who decamped to more congenial climes to share those improved comforts which their own town had neglected, and thus, when the reaction came and bad times set in, Wigan stood as it was before its prosperity, while neighbouring towns from the very midst of their distress could look proudly on the improvements and increased importance of their station. Thus was the ancient town left behind in the race of urban prosperity, although its natural position and advantages were more conducive to prosperity than even those of Manchester, which is now a city to be proud of, though once insignificant in comparison with Wigan. It has been even more conservative in its progress than in its politics. In the 17th century many charities were bestowed on it which, had the town's prosperity been pushed and established, like that of others, would now have been worth fabulous sums compared with the original principal. The charities of Leigh, Markland, Guest, Sixsmith, Ford, Welles, Mason, Bullock, Molyneux, and others of the 17th century are, instead of producing enormous amounts, little more valuable according to the difference of money then they were at their foundation. Some charities have indeed been altogether lost, such as those of Sale (1722), Baldwin (1726), and Forth (1761).

Money is the representative of wealth, and can never be equally distributed. There is no fixed law, method, or certain road by which it can inevitably be obtained. Birth neither insures its stability nor increase, intellectual ability by no means guarantees it, and even commercial prosperity honestly gained and conducted, is liable to woful interruptions and failures. Affluence is not the infallible result of perseverance, nor one of the freaks of fortune and luck. Money and benevolence are not natural allies. Gold may be but the useless hoards of the miser who has no sympathy with his fellow-men, or the property of him whose only wish is to be rich. Many have toiled to be rich, with the noble intention of sharing their wealth with the poor, and yet have been so fascinated by the luxuries of acquired wealth that their former ideas of charity have given place to tyranny over poverty. Yet there have been many poor persons, in modern and ancient Wigan, who have shared their scanty crumbs with beggars who could not requite them, and rich men who, from the same philanthropic motives, have given their own comforts as luxuries to the poor. Often in the ancient and loyal borough has the "one touch of nature" moved the rich to provide for the wants of the poor both in their life-time and by their legacies. The motive, not the amount of money, is the measure of philanthropy. There are townsmen now who often bestow more charity than Bullock or any of the old charity founders did at their death, and yet their deeds are not heard of; but the relative value of money now and then, as well as incomes and capitals, is very different. Those philanthropic forefathers of Wigan knew the comforts of wealth and education, and said, not merely "God bless you" to the poor, but clothed and fed them, and thus lured them as it were from poverty to happiness by their Christian acts. The poverty of the town was remarkably great, and the misery and want of education must have made the lives of the poor a burden to themselves. Children grew up even ignorant of their letters, and, like their fathers, could neither read nor write. Pictures and images were the only substitutes for books, and these could only be seen in the parish church, and there were few there. The children of the rich might be taught to read and write at great expense, but there was no school for the poor, and lads, naturally intelligent and quick, received no scholastic education, but by their innate abilities became apt scholars in the evil ways of the world. Wealthy burgesses sometimes combined to pay for the services of a tutor, who could do little more than read and write; but the poor little ragged Arabs of the town, intelligent sons of intelligent workmen, had from an early age to work for their living without any education or knowledge of books.

There were no poor's rates until after the Reformation. Doles were given to the poor at the parish church, where also were kept, *pro bono publico*, spits, polls,

and other articles for dressing provisions, as well as the inevitable box for receiving collections from the benevolent for the benefit of the poor. The parish church was the rendezvous of lads and lasses, merrymakers, philanthropists, and the poor, as well as the sacred house of prayer and praise.

When Bullock had already seen some of the good effects of his scholastic charity, he bequeathed by will, dated the 25th of July, 1618, "five messuages in Mincing-lane, in the parish of St. Dunstan-in-the-East (London) and a messuage in the parish of St. Botolph, Bishopsgate, to Roger Bullock, of Wigan, his nephew, son of his brother, John Bullock, of Wigan, in fee, charging the messuage in St. Botolph's, called the Chalice and Shepherd, being the corner house, with an annuity of £20 to the Corporation of Wigan, towards the maintenance of the Free School there."—(Not. Cest., vol. II., part II., page 251, note, Bullock). Roger made up his will four months afterwards, and then settled the annuity on the Wigan Corporation, although his widow retained her dower out of the premises. John Bullock, doubtless of the same family, was Mayor in 1640.

Whatever be the exact date of the foundation, there can be no doubt of the intentions of the founder or founders. It was instituted and endowed for the better educating and bringing up of youth and for the increase and advancement of true religion, virtue, and good manners. The scholastic laws, of Puritan strictness, were written out in a clear, bold hand, and by order of the Mayor and Corporation hung where they might be read. Master and usher were the servants of the Mayor for the time being. The Mayor was *le grande maître* of the school. The head-master had to be a graduate or undergraduate of some Protestant university, had to submit to an examination as to his fitness before the Bishop of Chester, and had to accept this post at a salary of £30 a year under the condition of a six months' trial. For £30 a year he had to give proof of his being sober and discreet, well skilled and experienced in school-learning and in original languages. He had to be able to speak Latin, for the elder boys were compelled to do the same in school hours on pains and penalties. He dared not accept any other employment, or absent himself from his duties without an *exeat* from the Mayor. Strange candidates must have been in the scholastic field in those days, for it was necessary for the governors to provide that the principal should be dismissed if he were detected of *notorious* licentiousness, such as *common* swearing, drunkenness, a common haunter of alehouses and taverns, or otherwise scandalous. Yea, they enacted that no schoolmaster or usher (at £10 a year) should keep any alehouse, or tavern, or house of gaming, or other unthriftiness or evil rule. If the head-master or usher were found to be infected with horrible, loathsome, or contagious disease, he was to be at once dismissed, but with a charitable relief as a pension, which was, no

doubt, a very small moiety of the £30 or £10 salary. The head-master had constantly to reside on the premises, and be specially careful of the books left as a library to the school by Dr. Lynacre. The dust had to be beaten from their sacred boards once every week. No holiday, except the ordained ones, could be given without the Mayor's special leave. If any grumbling or brainless parents, ignorant perhaps of their own trades, much more of the schoolmaster's important vocation, complained of the treatment of a spoilt or stupid son, the case had to be referred to the Mayor. If any scholar struck, spurned, or abused the master or usher, evidence of the facts had to be given before the Mayor before the pertinaciously bad boy could be expelled. The Mayor was literally the master of the school. Children who were toiling for their living had to work not less than twelve hours a day, and had only Sunday as a day of rest, but the Grammar School boys had only to attend eight hours a day, from seven to eleven in the morning, and from one to five o'clock in the afternoon; but they had also to attend on Sundays, go to the Parish Church, be therein catechised by the rector or his curate, and again be questioned on the service on Monday morning at school. A special rule enacted that no scholar should be allowed to go home to breakfast. No pupils were admitted who were not fit to be instructed in grammar. Grammar Schools were not meant to give mere mercantile education in, nor a common smattering of reading, 'riting, and 'rithmetic, but for a good fundamental, classical education in the literature of languages. In Wigan the master was to read and teach classical authors, chaste and clear, in order to grammatical learning and knowledge of the tongues, choosing for his authors Tully, Cassius, Salust, and Livy, with what others were used in the best schools for prose, and for verse Virgil, Ovid, Horace, and Terence; and in Greek he was to use the Greek Grammar, Greek Testament, Socrates, Zenophon, or such books as were usually used in the best schools. Special care was to be taken in the training of the pupils in good manners and decent deportment, and masters were required to punish the crimes of swearing, cursing, lying, drunkenness, filthiness, or obscene talking or bellowing, and were specially to see that the Lord's day was kept without profanation, both in and out of church.

No man could keep a public or private school without a special licence from the Bishop, by whom the candidate's character, ability, and religion were scrutinised. The law was that "No man shall teach either in public or private school but such as shall be allowed by the bishop of the diocese or ordinary of the place, under his hand and seal, being found meet as well for his learning and dexterity in teaching as for sober and honest conversation, and also for right understanding of God's true religion."

There were few schoolmasters in olden times who believed in gentle moral suasion. Thieves and robbers look on modern policemen as their born enemies, and such was the feeling of pupils to masters. Boys were apparently the very epitome of evil, and masters the only demons who could rule them, and that only with fear, flattery, and the lash. One would think all the evils of human nature were concentrated in the young mind ; that these had all to be uprooted, the mental soil prepared by rude cultivators on the flesh, and then the seminary required to sow the seeds of sense and usefulness, change the young rascal into a human being, train him up in the way he ought to walk, and turn him out a perfect man with a complete education. Some masters were pedagogic despots who, with frowning countenance in the morning, shed a dark melancholy over the bright animal spirits which tried to sparkle with joy, as if they had forgotten and forgiven the cruelties of the previous day. Such a despot was too great a mortal to condescend to talk to ignorant youth with winning and persuasive tongue, and lads were so stupid and untrained that knowledge had to be driven into them with such emphatic language as gentlemen would not apply to dogs. He was king in his own domains, and a tyrant under whose rule the urchins trembled in their shoes. All feared, but none respected or loved him. Affection was left at the door, like the mud on the mats from their little feet. If he was to be seen in the streets, instead of a happy and welcome recognition the lads changed their minds, and went another way, like a debtor from his solicitous tailor. If by some strange chance he visited the parents, the boys crouched silently and tremblingly in the corner, as if wishing he would, yet fearing lest he should, cane even his father and mother. But this inhuman strictness only made spirited youth more boisterous and mischievous when occasion offered, just as too Calvinistically brought up children run wild in revelry when they are set out in life. If they were thus unruly in stolen moments, what must have been their wild riotous pleasure in the legitimate custom of barring out the master. This was a custom allowed even by the deeds of the endowment in many schools, and was looked forward to by the boys with greater glee than if it were a holiday. Under the captaincy of the head boy, on a special day, generally before Christmas, books were packed away, the army of pupils arrayed, and the master pushed roughly or gently, according as he was a tyrant or favourite, to the door. Then all hands to work, forms and desks were piled one above the other behind the door, with the master's chair on the top. The door was barricaded, and the master barred out. Then there were wild revelry and lusty cheers. The head boy took the cane, and, in the middle of the ring of smiling pupils, broke it, and threw the pieces to be further broken by the younger furies. The room was like a den, in which the leader was the lion, and the others

the untamed cubs. In a few minutes was heard the knocking at the door, and everyone, knowing well it was the exiled master, called out, "Who's there?" "It is I; open, you rogues!" the master would call in pretentious fury, but they were masters of the situation, and would only open conditionally, like the infuriated barons and people of England of whom they had been daily reading, who would not grant the supplies until royalty signed some charter. The conditions were that all past and present offences should be forgiven, and on no others would the door be opened. Evasive answers would be made, but in vain, and at last, like a poor benighted suppliant at the gates of a monastery, he would feebly yield to the conditions, and be admitted, with three hearty good cheers, no punishments for that day, and the usual routine commenced. This was a custom not at all confined to Lancashire grammar schools, but was general in the kingdom.

Fleetwood, in his day, had laboured zealously to purify his parish, and that with great success, for he had strenuously put down the scandalous scenes by which the Sunday was desecrated; but the influence of a corrupt example at Court was by no means easy to withstay. The king had made his south-western tour, and observed the Calvinistic solemnity of Sunday, and, thinking to win the favour of the people, published his "Book of Sports," by which he granted them leave to desecrate the holy day, for was he not Lord of the Sabbath, being appointed king by divine right. He ordered his book to be read in all churches, which was accordingly done by Mr. Bridgeman, in the Parish Church, fourteen years after the death of Mr. Fleetwood, and three years after Mr. Bridgeman had been presented to the living by the king. Many clergymen and Archbishop Abbot himself refused either to read it or allow it to be read. All quietly disposed persons were shocked at the proclamation, and the evilly disposed became licentious to an extraordinary degree, being like wild animals let loose after being long cooped up. The Book of Sports, so offensive to all well disposed persons, authorised as lawful recreations, after morning divine service, "dancing by both sexes, archery for men, leaping and vaulting, May games, Whitsun-ales, and morris dances;" but as if to limit license itself "bull-baiting, bear-baiting, interludes, and bowling" were denounced as unlawful, ungodly, and therefore prohibited by the divine appointed king. Thus the work of the Ecclesiastical Commission under Lord Derby in 1579 was undone. That commission had issued a mandate against pipers and minstrels, making and frequenting bear-baiting and bull-baiting on the Sabbath days or upon any other days, and also against superstitious ringing of bells, wakes and common feasts, drunkenness, gaming, and other vicious and unprofitable pursuits. To these must be added the ordinary sports of the Grammar School boys. One corner of the playground was specially sacred and memorable to many generations—the tennis

court. It was there that new comers had to decide whether they were brave boys or bullies by an honest stand-up fight within a ring formed by their gleeful fellow pupils. Such school fights were common not only in Wigan, but at all good schools up to the middle of the present century, when they justly began to be discountenanced, and are now almost affairs of the past.

The Grammar School was founded for the free education of the poor, and endowed that the master's salary should be assured. Although a free school, the number of free scholars was limited, and the master received his salary whether he had pupils or not. The certified stipend had the effect of procuring an able master, superior to any who might be sufficiently venturesome to devote a lifetime as a labour of love for the chance pence of the pupils, and thus, in addition to the free pupils, the better classes, for there was little caste in towns in those days, paid for their sons being educated there. The paying far outnumbered the free pupils, and by and by the claims of the poor, with the improvements of the age, seemed to be overlooked altogether, and the fees so augmented as practically to close the doors against the poor altogether. In short the institution was monopolised by the rich, whose sons received a classical and commercial education at the lowest possible fees, which were far beyond the means of the poor. The people grumbled, but did nothing until the 11th January, 1838, when a petition was drawn up, signed by 683 inhabitants, and presented to the Mayor and Council, reminding them of their duties as guardians of public trusts and custodians of charities, and drawing their attention to the necessity "of taking immediate steps to abolish the unjust monopoly connected with the management of the Wigan Free Grammar School, and to urge upon the Council, as the real reformers of abuses, the propriety of opening the school for the benefit of those for whom the original founders intended it, viz., the poor, and express regret that the Council, as the guardians of the rights of the people, should so long have overlooked an object of such vital importance to the present and to every future generation."

As the Statutes, Constitutions, and Orders of the Grammar School have never before been printed, I here give a copy of them. The first twenty-eight of them were first drawn up in 1664, and those, with the two added in 1711 and 1720 respectively, were exhibited in a prominent part of the old school in Rodney Street, until scholastic work ceased in those premises.

STATUTES, constitutions, and orders made and appointed by the Mayor of the Corporation of Wigan, in the county of Lancaster, by the advice and consent of all the feoffees, intrusted for the Free Gramar Schoole there for and concerning the honest qualities, manners, and learning; as also the election, admission, expulsion, displacing, manner of teaching, houres of teaching, and all other things whatsoever

concerning the rule and government of the schoolemasters and schollers of the aforesaid schoole, as followeth. Aug. 9th, Ano. Dom. Caroli Sedi, Ang. Scot, Franc et Hibern, Decimo Septo. Annoy Dom. 1664.

IMPRIMIS.—It is limited and ordayned that no person whatsoever shall be capable of being admitted to be principall or head-schoolemaster of the said Free Gramar Schoole, but such as have taken the degree of Master or Batchelor of Arts in one of the Universities of Oxford or Cambridge, or some Protestant University elsewhere; or, if such cannot be procured, some undergraduate of the Universities aforesaid, or other sufficient well-qualified scholler, who is to be sober, discreet, and also well skilled and experienced in schoole learning and in the original languages, wherein they are to instruct their schollers. And to the end that they may be certaynly thus qualified, it is ordayned that, before the election of any master, his abilities aforesaid shall be tried by the Right Reverend Lord Bishop of Chester for the time being, or such other learned orthodox persons as the said Mayor of Wigan for the time being and the greater number of feoffees shall desire or appoint; and being very well satisfied of his sufficiency and integrity, the said principal, or head-maister, shall first be and remayne six months upon tryall in the said schoole, and then upon further approbation shall be confirmed principal master of the said Grammar Schoole, under the hands of the said Mayor of Wigan for the time being and the greater number of the said feoffees, at which time the said master shall subscribe a bond of £100 that he shall submit to the rules and orders of the schoole, and quietly depart from and leave the possession of the said schoole when the said Mayor of Wigan and the greater number of feoffees shall require.

SECONDLY.—It is ordayned that no person shall be capable of being admitted usher, or under-master, of the said Free School of Wigan but such as are of competent knowledge and learning, both in the Latin and Greek tongues, and so well qualified in school learning as may enable him to instruct the schollers in case of the head-master's absence; and that he shall be fit and capable, by reason of his learning and abilities, to be received and entertained in either of the Universities of Oxford or Cambridge, and the tryall hereof to be before the said Reverend Lord Bishop of Chester for the time being, or such other learned orthodox persons as the said Mayor of Wigan for the time being and the greater number of feoffees shall desire and appoint.

THIRDLY.—It is ordayned that if any person or person so elected and appointed as master or usher shall be afterwards found insufficient or remissly negligent, or upon just occasion be detected of notorious licentiousness, such as comon swearing, whoring, drunkenness, a comon haunter of alehouses and taverns, or otherwise scandalous, or shall take upon him or them any other charge or imployment, to the

hindrance of his or their performance of the duty of the said places that then they, the said Mayor for the time being and the greater number of the said feoffees, upon their own knowledge or assured evidence thereof, shall remove him or them, or either of them, found so obnoxious to good rule and government, and cease all further payments to him or them (save for the time he or they shall serve); and in their rooms elect and settle such other sufficient master and usher into the said places and imployments, qualified as before mentioned, as they, the said Mayor and feoffees, shall think fitt.

FOURTHLY.—The schoolmaster and usher elected and appointed, as aforesaid, shall be constantly resident and attendant upon their trust; and if they be observed to be absent from the school at the times hereafter mentioned for his attendance, without the Mayor of Wigan's consent, and to neglect his due performance in the instructing and teaching of the schollers, so that upon complaint inquiry and examination it be found to be true by the said Mayor for the time being and the greater number of the feoffees; and thereupon the said master or usher being admonished, and no amendments immediatly follow, then the said Mayor and feoffees, upon three months' warning, shall remove them, and shall proceed to elect and settle other sufficient persons, qualified as before said, in their place and office; and if the master or usher at any time desire to depart for their preferment or otherways, they shall give three months' warning to the Mayor of Wigan, upon payne of forty shillings, to be deducted out of their wages, that so the schoole may not be disapointed of constant teaching.

FIFTHLY.—No schoolmaster or usher shall keep any alehouse or tavern, or house of gaming, or other unthriftiness or evil rule.

SIXTHLY.—The schoolmaster and usher shall not be absent from the school at one and the same time, that so the schollars may not be neglected.

SEVENTHLY.—It is ordayned that the schoolmaster for the time being shall have and receive the sum of thirty pounds per annum, and the usher ten pounds per annum, standing wages, to be paid quarterly, and the first payment to comence upon the twenty-ninth day of September next ensueing the date hereof.

EIGHTHLY.—The master shall take special care of the library now belonging to the school, or that shall hereafter be brought for the school; to have a perfect catalogue of them written in a book to be fixed to the desk, there always to remain, of all such books as are or shall be brought together, with the names of the authors and editions, together with the number of the volumes of every the said books, with the names of any future donors; and shall be ready to give a true and perfect account of the said library when the said Mayor for the time being and the feoffees shall require it; and that none of the said books (upon any pretence

whatsoever) shall be lent out or removed out of the said library at any time. And the master and usher for the time being shall from time to time appoint such or so many of the schollars as he or they know fitt to make use of the said library books, or so many of them as shall be usefull for their better profiting in their respective way of learning; and that none whosoever shall be suffered to write in, scratch on, or deface with pen or otherwise, any of the said books; and that once in a week, by the care and appointment of the master and usher, the dust shall be beaten and putt of the said books, and the like care to be taken by them for the preservation and good usage of them the aforesaid books, as by experience they shall find best, or otherwise shall be advised.

NINTHLY.—The master may grant part of a day, and no more, for recreation in a month, except it be by consent of the Mayor of Wigan for the time being, provided it be not on Friday (market day); and also each Thursday, in the afternoon, from three of the clock, in the summer half-year, and the whole Thursday afternoone in the winter half-year shall be a remedy for recreation; and for the winter half-year the school shall be continued, as now it is accustomed, till twelve of the clock.

TENTHLY.—If the master or usher be visited and infected with any horrible, loathsome, or contagious disease, he shall be removed by the Mayor and feoffees for time being, with some charitable relief out of the revenue of the said school, to be extended towards him at the discretion of the said Mayor and feoffees, and another meet person chosen in his stead that shall be removed.

ELEVEN.—The master or usher, upon the first meeting every morning, after a solemn prayer for God's blessing, shall cause a chapter to be read by any schollar he pleaseth to appoint; and before their departure in the evening they shall sing one of David's Psalms, or a part thereof, as the master or usher shall appoint, and then conclude with prayer and thanksgiving; and hereof the master and usher are enjoined to take care that these religious duties be duly and diligently performed and attended by the schollars as becometh such holy performances, to which end the master is to have a roll of all the schollars, which is to be orderly called over twice or thrice every week, that the absent schollars may be punished for their negligence, according as the master and usher judge meet.

TWELVE.—The master and usher shall take special care that all the schollars do constantly repair to the church every Lord's Day morning and afternoon, and other days set apart for God's worship, and be placed together in the church, with or neare unto the master and usher, if so there be, or hereafter shall be, any conveniency procured so to do, and that they decently and reverently behave themselves under the publick ordinances, and submit themselves to be publickly catechised, as the Rector of Wigan, or his curate, shall from time to time appoint. And that one

or more schollars be appointed to view and take notice of such schollars as shall absent or not decently behave themselves during the time of publick prayers and sermons; and that every Monday morning account shall be required by the master or usher of any so offending, who shall be corrected as the nature of the offence shall deserve. And it is further ordained that every Monday morning, after reading of the chapter, some short convenient time be spent by the master or usher, or both, in calling some schollars at one time, and some at another time, to give account of their profiting on the Sabbath Day before, and to the end that catechising, being of such singular use for the trayning up of youth in the knowledge of the oracles of God, may be the better carryed on that the master or usher, or both, shall spend one hour at the least every other Saturday throughout in catechising the schollars.

THIRTEEN.—The school shall break up six days before the Feast of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and three days before Easter and Whitsunday, and not sooner; and the master shall begin to teach after Christmas upon the next week day after the twelfth day, and after Easter upon the Monday next after Low Sunday, and after Whitsontide upon Monday after Trinity Sunday. Saturday, in the afternoon, with all holidays used in the Church of England, are to be allowed for the schollars' refreshment, as is accustomed.

FOURTEEN.—The master shall teach and read classical authors, chaste and clear, in order to gramatical learning and knowledge of the tongues, with a special regard to the Protestant religion, morality, and pure language, such as Tully, Caesar's Comentaries, Salust, and Livie, with what others are most used in the best of free schools for Prose. And for verse, Virgil, Ovid, Horace, and Terence; for Greek, the Greek Gramar, Greek Testament, Socrates, addemoni, or Zenophon, his Tyrus, with such other authors for verse or Greek as are usually taught in the best schools.

FIFTEEN.—The hours of coming and departing from the school, from the 10th of March to the 10th of September yearly, shall be from seven of the clock in the morning to eleven, and from one of the clock untill ffive of the clock in the afternoon; and from the said tenth day of September untill the said tenth day of March from half an hour after seven of the clock in the morning (save about two months, when days are shortest, from eight) till eleven, and from one of the clock till three, four, or five of the clock in the afternoon, according as convenient daylight may fall out for the scholars going home. It being ordained that no candles shall be used in the school for teaching at any time.

SIXTEEN.—That no children that have upon them any *noysome* or infectious diseases shall during the same time be admitted, or if, after admission, any shall fall into such maladies, they shall be removed untill they are perfectly cured.

SEVENTEEN.—The master and usher shall have a special care to the good manners

and decent deportment of the scholars towards all persons, and shall exemplary punish all misdemeanors, especially the crimes of swearing, cursing, lying, drunkenness, filthy or obscene talking, or betting, reproaching or miscalling persons by foul language, gaming for anything of price, and in an especial manner shall diligently endeavour to see the Lord's Day kept free from any profanation (as much as in them lyeth), as well after as during the scholars being in the church.

EIGHTEEN.—All scholars, of what degree soever, are to submit to due correction from the schoolmaster or usher, which shall be promised by the parents at their admission and referred to the schoolmaster's discretion; and all stubborn or disobedient scholars that are pertinaciously or exemplary bad browbeating the master or usher, or offering to struggle with, strike, spurn, or abuse the master or usher when he or they are orderly correcting them for their faults after two admonitions, wherewith their parents or friends be acquainted that the third time be expelled the school, after due proof thereof made before the Mayor of Wigan and greater number of feoffees for the time being; and those parents that molest the schoolmaster against reason and order for correction of their children, their children shall be utterly expelled the school for ever, unless they can prove the correction unreasonable; and all schollars shall be obedient and ready to help the master or usher for the due and lawfull correction of any stubborn schollar they punish it.

NINETEEN.—No schollar shall bring to the school or wear any weapons neither shall any schollar make an *affray* upon his fellow-schollar, upon pain of severe correction from the master or usher; and if any schollar be a common quarrellor and setter of debate, and fighting amongst the schollars, and will not amend after correction and admonition by the master or usher, upon complaint from the master or usher to the Mayor of Wigan for the time being and the greater number of feoffees, and due proof made thereof, he shall be expelled the school.

TWENTY.—No schollar, being in health, shall be absent above six days together, and that with the master's allowance, and if he shall be longer absent after admonition of the schollar, or notice given to the parents or friends, unless in some extraordinary case and the master approveing the excuse, shall forfeit all priviledges in the school, unless the said Mayor of Wigan and greater number of feoffees for the time being, upon hearing the cause, do order re-admission upon promise from parents or friends that there shall be more constant attention upon the school for better profiting in learning.

TWENTY-ONE.—All schollars that have attained to such progress in learning as to be able to speak Latine, shall neither within school or without, when they are among the schollars of the same or a higher time, speak English, and that the master shall appoint which are the formes that shall observe this order of speaking

Latin, and shall take care that it be observed and due correction given to those that do neglect it.

TWENTY-TWO.—Each schollar shall be placed according to his progress in learning, and without partiality, preferred by the master according to his desert, and in case of injury offered herein by the master, there shall be appeal to the Mayor of Wigan and greater number of feoffees for the time being.

TWENTY-THREE.—That once in six weeks, or two months at the furthest, throughout the year, Saturday in the forenoon shall be spent by so many of the upper formes as shall be fitted for it in such exercises as these:—Construing of such authors of themselves as the master shall appoint; proposing of gramatical or historical questions one unto another, and making declarations; and such like exercises as may tend to the begetting of an emulation amongst the schollars in learning.

TWENTY-FOUR.—No schollar shall at any time with knife, or otherways whatsoever, cut or break the windows, wainscott, formes, seats, tables, desks, doors, or any other materials belonging to the school or library, the master, upon conviction of such offender or offenders, shall give him or them exemplary punishments.

TWENTY-FIVE.—The usher shall stand to the master's direction for method and order of teaching; also the master shall often examine the profiting of the schollars under the usher's teaching, and by himself (or if need be) by advice of the Mayor of Wigan and feoffees for the time being take course for regulating for what shall be amiss.

TWENTY-SIX.—The schollars' play shall be shooting in the long bow, running, leaping, and other harmless sports; but to avoid cards, dice, and other unlawful games, and betting openly or covertly, upon pain of extreme punishment.

TWENTY-SEVEN.—These statutes and orders fairly written shall be fixed upon a convenient place publicly in the said school, and the master shall cause them to be read or shewed to all such persons as offer children to be admitted schollars, and also shall openly read them in the school once in a quarter of a year, from time to time, that so none may plead ignorance; and if any parents or friends refuse to have their children or relations to observe these statutes and orders, or any of them, they are not to be admitted into the school.

TWENTY-EIGHT.—The Mayor of Wigan and the greater number of the feoffees for the time being, upon their apprehending defects in any statutes or orders herein comprised, and that other orders are necessary, and may further tend to the good of the said school, shall meet so often as shall be requisite (at least twice in every year) to inlarge, alter, change, in substance or words, what by experience and prudent counsel shall appear to be behooffull to the furtherance of literature and education of youth.

11TH JUNE, 1760.—Ordered further by the feoffees of the said school—first, that

the head-master shall not for the future take under his care and instruction any schollar or schollars who shall not be then fitt to be instructed in the grammar. And that no schoolmaster or usher shall hereafter teach or instruct any schollar or other person writing, or arithmetick in the school hours. And that the schollars shall not for the future be allowed to be absent from school in order to go home to breakfast.

2ND OCTOB., 1711.—That the usher shall not hereafter take upon him to teach and instruct any schollar or schollars, but that are learning in the Testament and books above.

CHAPTER XIV.

Change and Signs of Coming Trouble—M.P.'s—Stanley—The Court and Local Baronetcies—Gerrard Massie—Dispute between the Corporation and the Rector : The Decision—M.P.'s for Wigan—Missionaries of the King in Wigan—Re-building of Chancel in the Parish Church—Fourth Parliament of James I.—Apprentices—Haigh School—Ship Money : Amount paid by Wigan—Dr. Mason—Local Wills—Eve of Revolution—Members for Borough and County—Bell Founding, one of the Staple Trades of Wigan.

IT is good for a man to bear the burdens of life in his youth, if he has the satisfaction of succeeding at last. The more trials and difficulties one overcomes the better man he is at the end. Never had any constitution a more chequered growth than that of England. Sanguinary troubles abroad, civil wars, religious tyranny, and political turmoil at home were the constant successors and predecessors of each other. So great was now the combination of national evils that the national mind was quite undecided what to expect or do. Papacy and Protestantism had alternately triumphed : royal prerogatives had grown to gigantic tyrannies : rebellion had prospered : State trials had frequently been reduced to burlesques and justice to a farce. In Wigan, as in other parts of England, people were thinking what they should think about, and wondering what they ought to wonder at. The past was an enigma, and the future a mystery. Wiganers were as a people who dream they are awake, whilst thinking they dream. Great changes were expected, and yet no great change took place. The queen died, and the great royal pageant procession from Edinburgh to London commenced.

Sir John Poultney and Sir William Cooke were the members for the borough in the first Parliament of James I. (1603-4, March 19th, to 1610-11, Feb. 9th). They are supposed also to have been returned for the next Parliament (1614), all the returns for which have been lost. Lord Derby was Mayor. The persecuting Fleetwood was dead. What was there to fear or to apprehend ? Was there not cause for Wigan to rejoice ? The king himself on this southern procession was the guest of Sir Thomas Gerard, and afterwards of the Mayor, Earl Derby, at his house of English hospitality.

Notwithstanding the fear and trembling of the many different religious sects, Wigan rejoiced at her local honours, and hoped for the best. Ferdinand, the fifth Earl of Derby, and father of the Mayor, William, the sixth Earl, had been a notorious character, in the persecutions of Papal heretics. It was he who was the political tool of Fleetwood. He had scoured the country in pursuit of heretical game, and rejoiced to be always in at the death. The craftiness of the fox—which in him was mere religious zeal—was as much a part of his nature, or dogmatic habit, as that of the keen, instinctive earnestness of the pursuing hound. By his determination to succeed he raised up for himself many bitter foes, by one of whom it is generally supposed he was poisoned in 1594. His son, William, was of domesticated habits, and took very little part in public affairs, with the exception of regularly attending Parliament. Shortly after his mayoralty of 1618 his family was reduced to comparative poverty by a long course of litigation. He practically gave over his estates in his lifetime to his son, the "Great Stanley."

The prodigality and profligacy of the Court, and the urgent demands of creditors vexed by disappointments, soon brought James to the depths of regal poverty. Great was the opinion of his own self-importance, but greater still was the meanness of his actions. He was but a puppet in the hands of men by whom he believed he was worshipped. Yet these sycophants were his dependents, and money, the very source of their poverty, had to be obtained to support the profane and profligate customs of the Court, and such a despicable view did this despicable monarch take of the duties devolving upon him by divine right that he actually pawned and sold that justice which he was appointed to protect. Honours were sold for filthy lucre, offices of influence and State were vended, like articles of commerce in the Market Place, and for a thousand pounds the title of baronet could be obtained. The first creation of baronets was on May 22nd, 1611, when eighteen knights, for a thousand pounds a head, were so raised in the social scale. Of these eighteen three were knights from good families of the neighbourhood of Wigan, of which borough they were burgesses: Sir Richard Molyneux, of Sefton, knight; Sir Richard Houghton, of Houghton Tower, knight; and Sir Thomas Gerard, of Bryn. The Molyneux family are now ennobled as Earls of Sefton, and in 1876 Gerard of Bryn was created Baron Gerard of Bryn.—(Dugdale's list of English Baronets, 1681).

Gerrard Massie was presented by King James to the living at Wigan in 1604, where he was instituted on the 12th October of that year. He had been educated at Brasenose College, of which he was afterwards made a fellow. He was a Master of Arts, a Doctor in Divinity, and a Proctor of the University of Oxford. After having been Rector in Wigan he was nominated and elected Bishop of Chester in 1619, on the translation of Dr. Thomas Moreton to Lichfield and Coventry, but,

unfortunately, died that same year, before he was consecrated.—(Wood's *Athenæ Oxoniensis*).

At this time (1618) an important dispute originated between the Corporation of the town and the Rector, Bishop Bridgeman. Since the borough had received its first charter it had grown in importance. Privileges, powers, and rights had been acquired which seemed entirely to eclipse those of the rector, and it was now considered a fitting time and proper duty of the Corporation to throw off all allegiance to him. They declared he had no right to the market tolls or fees, and that the Moot Hall—built in the time of Henry VII.—was the property of the town, and that the only court over which he had any claim was that formerly held at his own Hall, beside his own prison. He, of course, was unwilling to lose any of his powers or prerogatives, and the parties went to law. It was referred to the king, and he appointed four arbiters, who were to hear evidence on both sides and give judgment, which was to be final. The arbiters were the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of Ely, and two Chief Justices. They adjudged “that Wigan was a manor, of right belonging to the rector, and it was ordered that the Monday market and Holy Thursday Fair, with all profits, &c., should be the parson's in his own right; and that Friday market and St. Luke's Fair should be the town's; that the Easter Leet should belong to the parson, and Michaelmas Leet to the burgesses; that the use of the Moot Hall should be common to both, and that the Prentice Plea and Court of Pleas should be the Corporation's.”—(*Notitia Cest. Register Book*, 2, p. 90, 203, &c.) Mention is also made of this suit in the award of Sir Orlando Bridgeman in the following language:—“Also, whereas, by an award made on or about the 23rd day of february, in the year of our Lord 1618, by George, then Lord Arch. Bpp. of Canterbury; Lancelot, Lord Bishp. of Ely; Sir Henry Montague, Cheife Justice to the Court of King's Bench; and Sir Henry Hobert, Cheife Justice of the Court of Common Pleas; between the then parson of Wigan and the Corporation, upon a Referrance from the late King James, of ever blessed memory, The sd. Refferrees did order that the faire kept yearly at Wigan upon St. Luke's day, and the Markett kept there every ffryday, weekly, and the Prentice and the Court of Pleas, and the Michaelmas Leet, wth. the profits of the same, shold be the Corporation's. I do accordingly,” &c.

The third Parliament of James I. met on the 30th January, 1621, exactly twenty-eight years before the day on which British history was stained with blood by regicides. The two members for Wigan were Sir Thomas Gerard and Roger Downes. Sir Thomas was the first Baronet of Bryn, and was grandson of Sir Thomas Gerard, knight, who had been member for the county in the Parliament of 1562-3. He died in 1620, nine years after he had been raised to the baronetcy

(22nd May, 1611). Robert Downes had sat for Wigan before, in the Parliament of 1601, having for his colleague John Poultney. He was the son of Roger Downes, of Cheshire, and was the representative of his family at the visitation of St. George in 1613. The Parliament, of which these two were members, was an important one. The nation was already groaning under grievances. The Stuarts were stubbornly standing on their insane dignity of divine right, and flatterers who sought royal favours defended their views in speeches and publications. The evils of purveyance and sale of monopolies and bribery in high places the Commons sternly set their faces against, and impeached the Chancellor, Bacon, the greatest man of his day. Freedom of speech was claimed as the birthright of Englishmen, and a protest against all interference of such was formally entered in the Journal of the Commons, upon hearing which the king sent for the Journal, tore out the protestation, and immediately dissolved Parliament, and imprisoned some of the leading members.

Out of "his zeal for God's glory" the great pedant James I. paid for four missionaries, or itinerant preachers, to work up the benighted parts of Lancashire, so anxious was he for the spread of Episcopalian Protestantism. £40 a year was given to these kingly zealots who, of course, visited Wigan amongst other benighted places—benighted although the Bishop was the Rector. But they were worldly missionaries who rejoiced at an opportunity of becoming pluralists, for when they came to a wealthy place with a vacant living they contrived to persuade the people they were gifted zealots, and were generally successful in being appointed to the living, and retaining at the same time their royal pension of £40. King James objected, and, considering himself swindled, he wrote to Bishop Bridgeman to forbid his pensioners to accept other livings whilst retaining his missionary appointment.

The old Parish Church had weathered the storms of ages, but, like many of the formerly grand houses of Wigan, was rapidly falling into decay, and it was necessary to make an effort to re-build or prop it up in its old age. Its memories and associations were too dear to allow it altogether to decay, like the dust of their forefathers of the town who slumbered in its precincts. There the ancestors of the town had worshipped and were buried; there their fathers and themselves had been christened and married; there they listened to the truths that console humanity; and there they hoped to take their long last rest. Surely the feelings of patriotism and sympathy of a people are dead when they allow their ancient sacred edifice to die away, like an unknown pauper in a large union. Bishop Bridgeman took a hearty interest in the matter, and spoke of the necessity of the restoration. The people knew what was needed, but money was scarce, times were bad, and never had really been so good as to create a necessity for banks.

However, sufficient subscriptions were forthcoming, and the bishop re-built the chancel in 1621 in a "debased style."

In the fourth and last Parliament of James I. the two members for Wigan were Sir Anthony St. John, knight, and Francis Downes. Sir Anthony was the brother of the first Earl of Bolingbroke, and was knighted in 1608. Francis Downes was the second son of Roger, who was member for the borough in the previous Parliament. The Parliament met on the 12th of February, 1623, and was dissolved 24th March, 1625, on the death of the king.

The great political struggle, afterwards matured by civil war, was about to begin. A Briton who has attained to years of discretion, and yet has no politics, has no mind of his own. If he be a Whig to a Whig, and a Tory to a Tory, he is an individual who should be avoided in business as well as in politics. If he have an unwavering, uncompromising, and yet reasonable bias for one side or the other, he is a man with a fixed principle, and will not wilfully do a mean act. The most bitter and decided political enmity in England is quite compatible with sincere friendship and respect. The greatness of a country can neither be ascribed to one party nor another. Party spirit has made Britain what it is, and maintains it so. Had any one of the two great parties had its own wilful sway, England would long before this have decayed, like other great nations. The mainspring of English political machinery is the counterbalancing rivalry which, in all cases of emergency, sinks into insignificance, yields to the national feeling or impulse, and, when the national crisis is over, a strong opposition party inevitably springs up, the rivalry becomes as keen as ever, and thus the grandest constitutional monarchy is in the hands of reasonable people, and the endowment of unsurpassed human freedom bestowed on us by our forefathers is maintained as the special beauty and glory of our land.

In many respects Charles I. contrasted favourably with his father, but he was a Stuart, and so believed himself bound by no promises or oaths, but answerable to God alone. His first Parliament had but a short existence of two months, his second was equally unfortunate, and as summarily dismissed in a temper, although he had taken the precaution of imprisoning his most violent political opponents or of making them sheriffs, so that they might not be eligible as members of Parliament. Of the Wigan elections for his first Parliament only the results are known, but for the second (1627) I have been fortunate enough to find at the Town Clerk's office the original writ and a complete poll book, which, although in some respects very dilapidated, are yet for the most part quite legible. In 1625, the first Parliament of Charles I., the members elected for Wigan were Francis Downes, Esq., and Edward Bridgeman, Esq., the latter being the younger brother of

John Bridgeman, Bishop of Chester and Rector of Wigan, and the ancestor of the Earl of Bradford. He died in 1645, having sat for Wigan in two Parliaments (1625 and 1628) and for Liverpool in one. Having illegally raised taxes and highly displeased his already embittered subjects, the king was prevailed upon to summon a second Parliament, and for Wigan the following writ was issued by the sheriff, Edmund Assheton :—

“Edmund Assheton, Esq., Sheriff of y^e County Pallantyne of Lancaster, unto y^e Mayor of Wigan, or his sufficient deputy, sendeth greeting :—By virtue of the writt of our Sovereign Lord y^e King to mee, dyrected and delyvered, I command you that, freely and indyfferently within your borough, you make choyce, according to the form of the statutes in such cases made and provided, of two of y^r sufficient burgesses, to come unto and bee at His Mat^s High Court of Parliament, to bee held at the City of Westminster y^e seventeenth day of March next ensuing. And that you duly return this warrant unto me; as also that you send me one indenture sealed with the common seal of your Corporation, expressing the names and surnames, with the true additions of those whom you for this specyall service shall so choosse. See hereof you fayle not at your peril, and as you tender his Mat^s favour.—Given under the seals of my office, the 7th day of February, 1627.—J. EDM. ASSHETON.”

The old borough had not yet acquired the *soubriquet* of malignant, for it had neither been a political nor revolutionary representative. Englishmen generally took little or no interest in politics, for affairs upon the whole had been going very smoothly with sovereign and people, except in religious matters, in which it was generally allowed by both parties that a natural national stubbornness, rather than want of persuasive argument, prevented a mutual agreement. The issue of a writ for Wigan was consequently looked upon with somewhat of indifference, for the inhabitants placed no great value on their elective prerogative, although the thinking part of the population were not blind to the advantages. The political enthusiasm of discontent throughout the country was, as yet, only like the growling of a disaffected dog which has no thought of biting; but the deeds of this, the third Parliament of Charles I., by which the famous Petition of Rights was enacted, gave a new stimulus to the thoughts and actions of the people. The election in Wigan was by no means devoid of interest, neither was it one of the stirring elections with which the name of the town afterwards became associated. The complete Poll Book for this year (1627) on two “Pot” pages (two leaves) has been temporarily placed at my service for use in this history. It contains the names of 138 burgesses, of whom only 74 voted. There were seven candidates, viz., Peter Houlford, one vote; Milus Pooly, one vote; Edward Boulton, one vote; Willus Prescott, one vote; Robert Gardner, eight votes; Sir Anthony St. John, sixty-five votes; Edward Bridgeman, sixty-three votes.

As this is the oldest known Poll Book I give a complete copy of it, direct from the original. Over all contracted Christian names there is a dash in the MS.

Nom. Burghm. infra vill. d. Wigan,
in Com. Lanc.

Thomas Bancks, gen., Maior—Sir Anthony St. John, Edw. Bridgeman, Esq.
Willus Comes Derby (Earl Derby).
Thomas Gerrard, miles et Barronett.
Ricus Molyneux, miles et Barronett.
Radus Asheton, Barronett.
Edrus Stanley, Barronett.
Alexr. Radcliffe, miles.
Anthonius Sanct John, miles—Edward Bridgeman.
Carolus Gerrard, miles—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
Thomas Walmesley, miles.
Will. Trafford, miles.
Gilbtus Houghton, miles.
Johes Stannope, miles.
Ricus Bould, Ar.
Thomas Gerrard, Ar.
Rogerus Bradshawe, Ar.
Rogerus Downes, Ar.
Alexander Rigbye de Midleton, Ar.
Hugo Rigbye, Ar.
Chrus Banistre, Ar.
Thomas Charnocke, Ar.
Alexander Rigbye de Burgh, Ar.
Thomas Standishe, Ar.
Chrus Houleford, Ar.—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
Edrus Eltonhead, Ar.
Theophilus Holte, Ar.
Thomas Langtree, Ar.
Willus Houghton, Ar.
Thomas Cosson, Ar.
Petrus Daniell, Ar.
Hugo Chamley, Ar.
Johes Meare, Ar.
Willus Gerrard, Ar.
Johes Gerrard, Ar.
Edrus Bromley, Ar.
Johes Culcheth, Ar.
franciscus Downes, Ar.
Hugo Adlington, senior, Ar.
Willus fforth, Ald.—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
Robtus Barrowe, Ald.—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
Willus ffoster, Ald.—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
Jacobus Markland, Ald.—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
Robtus Mawdesley, Ald.—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.

Document { Ald.
torn. { Ald.—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
Ald.—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
Ald.—Document destroyed.

Doubtless the names of the two other Aldermen have been torn away from this, the end of the column.

Carolus Leigh—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
Willus Casson—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
Chrus Banckes—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
Thurstanus Whalley—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
Jacobus Hardey—Robt. Gardner and Milus Pooly (?)
Gilbtus Gardner.
Robtus Jolly—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
Ricus Casson—Sir Anthony St. John and Robt. Gardner.
Willus Ormeshaw—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
Rogerus Scott—Sir Anthony St. John and Robt. Gardner.
Rogerus Baron—Edw. Bridgeman and Robt. Gardner.
Willus Leigh—Edw. Bridgeman and Robt. Gardner.
Jacobus Atherton—Edw. Bridgeman and Sir Anthony St. John.
Robtus Bancks—Edw. Bridgeman and Edward Boulton.
Radus fforth, braseer.
Henricus Marsheden.
Gilbtus Ashton—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
Alexander fforth, braseer, senior.
Galfrus Boulton.
Radus Astley—Edw. Bridgeman and Robt. Gardner.
Gilbtus Pennington.
Jacobus Cronck—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
Robtus Mason—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
Robtus Markland, braseer—Sir Anthony St. John and Robt. Gardner.
Edus Winstanley—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
Georgius Walton.
Gilbtus Baldwin—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
Willus Langshawe.
Alexander fforth de Scoles—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
Johes Brighhouse.
Edrus Boulton—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
Josephus Pennington—Sir Anthony St. John and Peter Houlford, Esq.
Jacobus Greene—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
Oliverus Leigh, senior—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
Gerrardus Johnson—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
Willus Watson—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
Michus Pennington.
Thomas Tarleton, senior—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
Willus Prescott—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
Robtus Kyndesley (?)—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
Rogerus ffoster—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
Henricus Hulme—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
Thomas fford

Robtus Markland—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
 Document { forth, pewterer—Edw. Bridgeman and Robt. Gardner.
 destroyed. { th, pewterer.
 Another name destroyed, *aner* only visible.
 Willus Crosfeild—Edw. Bridgeman and Robt. Gardner.
 Alexander forth, braseer, senior.
 Carolus Bancks.
 Gilbtus Baron.
 Alexander Boukley (?)—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
 Milo Turner—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
 Edrus ffareclough—Sir Anthony St. John and Willus Prescott.
 Petrus Greene—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
 Willus Lythgoe—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
 Radus Leigh—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
 Humfrus Chroychlawe—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
 Johes Molyneux—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
 Jacobus Lowe—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
 Alexander Ascrofte—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
 Hugo Cary (?)—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
 Thomas Lowe—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
 Johes Hyndley—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
 Ricus Scott—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
 Robtus Whalley—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
 Petrus And'ton.
 Hugo Scott, junior—Sir Anthony St. John and Robt. Gardner.
 Radus Bancks—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
 Robtus Prescott.
 Hamlett Greene.
 Johes Gregson—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
 Ricus Seddon—Sir Anthony St. John and Robt. Gardner.
 Johes Winstanley—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
 Robtus forth de Scowles.
 Willus Ascroft, jun.—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
 Edrus Mason—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
 Hugo Laithwaite—Sir Anthony St. John and Robt. Gardner.
 Willus Baldwin—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
 Bayles Heyshawe—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
 Willus forth, gen.—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
 Document destroyed. — gen.
 Johes Hilton, gen.
 Radus Marshe, gen.
 Andreus Leaver, gen.
 Thomas Anderton, gen.
 Oliverus Martin, gen.—Sir Anthony St. John and Edw. Bridgeman.
 Alexander Greene, gen.
 Radus Banckes, gen.
 Henricus Hodkinson, gen.
 Radus Ayneworth, gen.

Primo febr., 1627.

Witnes thereof, WILL. BROWNE.

The Sheriffs of Lancashire in the reign of James I. were :—Nic. Moseley, Thom. Baker, Edw. Fleetwood, Rich. Ashton, Rob. Hesketh, Edw. Trafford, Roger Nowell, Johan Fleming, Cut. Halsall, Rob. Bindlose, Rich. Shirborn, Edw. Stanley, Rolan. Moseley, Edw. Trafford, Ric. Shuttleworth, Leonar. Ashawe, Ed. Moore. The last three sheriffs in the reign of James I. and the first three in the reign of Charles are unknown.

The oldest gift in the possession of the Wigan Corporation was given by Robert Robert Mawdesley (named Alderman in this Poll Book), in 1631, for the use of the Mayor and his successors. It is a silver ewer or jug, bearing the inscription, "The gift of Robert Mawdesley, 1631 ; renewed 1680, by Sir Roger Bradshaigh ; again by James Hodson, Esquire, for the use of the Mayor and his successors." Since then several valuable gifts have been bestowed on the Corporation. Of the municipal insignia the oldest is a copper mace, surmounted by a crown which, although of unknown date, was certainly in the possession of the Corporation in the sixteenth century. Robert Mawdesley was the son and heir of William Mawdesley, of Mawdesley Hall. The ascertained genealogy of his family begins with Hugh de Mawdesley, named in an inquisition dated 1323, relating to the Priory of Penwortham. Robert seems to have taken no active, and certainly no distinguished, part in political matters. No doubt he admired the energetic Alexander Rigby, M.P. for Wigan, for he loved and married his daughter, Dorothy, in 1621, and by her had three sons and three daughters. His sons died unmarried ; his second daughter, Elizabeth, the only one of his children married, married the Rev. Peter Earle, Rector of Grappenhall, in Cheshire. They are the ancestors of the Earls of Liverpool. Robert Mawdesley, on the 21st September, 1657, purchased for £80 the estate of the Bamfords, of Mawdesley ; and afterwards the estate of Heskin Hall from Sir Richard Molyneux. His will is dated 9th September, 1651 : in that same year he died, and at his request, expressed in his will, he was buried in the grave of his brother, Joseph Rigby, where his wife Dorothy and youngest daughter had previously been buried. He bequeathed to his daughters, Dorothy and Elizabeth, all his goods, &c., and to his heir, Alexander, his two signet rings ; to his cousin, Edwin Rigby's wife, a mare ; and his best cow to his youngest son. His will was proved 23rd April, 1661.

Apprentices were generally bound for seven years on very strict conditions, legally drawn out, both parties entering into a bond to keep the same. The father being responsible for the son, he had to pay a certain amount to the master for taking him in charge, and also for keeping him in clothes and shoes. The master provided the apprentice with an apron, gave him board and lodgings, and promised faithfully to give him the best instruction he could. The apprentice was the entire servant of his master, bound to do all he could for his interest, keep the secrets of

his trade and family, never to absent himself day or night without special permission, was forbidden to visit taverns or marry during his apprenticeship. The employer was both master and guardian to the youth, and had full power to chastise him as he thought fit. The chief tradesmen of Wigan were braziers, pewterers, bell-founders, dyers, and weavers.

Haigh School was founded by Miles Sumer, according to his will dated 15th October, 1634. He had been a tenant, or superior and successful servant, of Roger Bradshaigh, of Haigh, to whom he gave full power to carry out his testamentary instructions. He devised that, after all expenses, debts, and legacies had been paid, his remaining property should be divided into three parts, two of which should go for the immediate repairs of Haigh roads and the perpetual benefit of the poor. A meeting of the inhabitants of Haigh decided that the money should be invested in lands, and the proceeds applied according to the testator's will. Accordingly a farm in Billinge, called "Outley-snape," was purchased, and the public school built and endowed for the teaching of children whose parents should be inhabitants of, or possessed of lands or tenements, or contributed to the lays in the said township of Haigh.

History shows there are intellectual, scientific, religious, and political, as well as meteorological cycles. There are ages of reason, of faith, and of doubt; ages of superstition and ages of science; ages of religious fanatics and ages when the Creed is "eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die;" ages when the attention of all men is given to the building of constitutional governments; and ages when reasonable men quietly submit to the yoke of the tyrant. For centuries the king and the country struggled for the mastership of the British Isles. Fierce and furious were the contests. Few and short were the lulls between the civil storms. The lowering clouds never dipped beneath the horizon. The sun that set resplendent in the glories of the victory of one day rose on the morrow to view a land bedewed with tears, but refreshed and ready to renew the struggle. However strong Reason might seem, Force was the conspicuously victorious tyrant; yet Reason never yielded, though trampled on, persecuted, and imprisoned; yea, these were its nourishing elements. The flames that burned the religious martyrs were the flickering blaze of beacons that illumined and exposed the superstitions of the dark age. The scaffold was the national pulpit, from which the blood of political preachers called upon all to behold and consider the earnestness and truth of the doctrine for which the martyrs died. Persecutions exposed the follies of infatuated rulers and fallibilities of all. The wayward tyranny of kings roused the stubbornness of the people. The religious cyclone had barely passed, with its thousands of victims, when the hurricanes of unconstitutional policies were renewed, and the suicidal Stuart beliefs reared their giant heads. Charles I.

was left with an empty exchequer, whilst he held a strong impression as to the necessity of carrying on war. The bold politicians which his father had bred and nourished by persecution were determined to uphold the constitution, to stand or fall in the cause of right. Favourites of the king, who were enemies of the people, were assassinated, and nobles were beheaded for supporting the law. The burdens on the people were grievous to be borne; they murmured and petitioned in vain, and the king prepared to lay the last straw on their backs, for when tyrants feel there is but one act standing between them and their will, it seems that fate drives them to hazard all on its destruction. Barbarous sentences were pronounced and executed, powerful opponents were put out of the way, and the illegal tax of ship money was levied, when the whole nation, like a hive of bees robbed of their queen and liberties, murmured and prepared to rise in rebellion. Every town and county was rated according to its wealth, and it is interesting to see that Wigan is proved by this tax to have taken one of the foremost places in the county for opulence. In 1636 the county of Lancaster had to provide one ship of 400 tons and 160 men, or £1000. Of this amount Wigan had to provide £50, Preston £40, Lancaster £30, Liverpool £25, Clitheroe and Newton £7 10s. each.

Among the most distinguished natives of Wigan the Rev. Henry Mason, B.D., must be mentioned. He was born in 1573, and received at least his primary education at Wigan, and doubtless from a private tutor. In his nineteenth year he proceeded to Brasenose College, Oxon, where he graduated, after distinguishing himself as an ardent and successful student. At the age of 29 he received the chaplaincy of Corpus Christi College, where he distinguished himself by taking a very active part in the controversies of the day. He was remarkable for his consistent orthodoxy, polished education, and philanthropy. The Bishop of London appointed him his chaplain, and he was afterwards made Rector of St. Andrew's, London. He was so vexed and harassed by the Presbyterians of London that in 1641 he gave up his living there and retired to Wigan, where he wished to live a quiet and unostentatious life; but even this was denied him, because of the constant harassments of the Republicans, who had been so displeased by the doctrines which were published not only by him, but by his elder brother, Francis, whose *Vindici Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ*, in five books, is often referred to and consulted by eminent divines of the present day.

Notwithstanding the persecutions to which he was subjected by the inhabitants, he was not forgetful of the poor of the town. He was the great local philanthropist of his day, who searched out the poor, supplied their present necessity, and provided for their future welfare. He gave Bibles to the poor and money to bind apprentices to useful trades, and added to Dr. Lynacre's first Free Library in the town by leaving his

extensive collection of valuable books for the use of the Grammar School. With the first hundred pounds which he gave to the Mayor and Aldermen for charitable purposes a cottage and thirteen acres of land were purchased in Rainford. On 17th June, 1639, he delivered to the Mayor, Aldermen, and others one hundred and forty pounds to be applied to the relief of the poor. In 1647, at the age of seventy-four, he died, and was regretted by all, notwithstanding his former religious differences. In him the poor lost a friend and the town a benefactor and worthy son.

No man with any property to dispose of hesitated to make his will, for to die intestate was to cause disputations amongst friends as certain as death itself. It is a strange relic of superstition that causes many to delay the performing of this important duty, for they are somehow impressed with the idea that when they have thus set the house in order they have prepared to die, and must die accordingly. But it is none of the work of preparation for death, but the representative of one's own speech to express an order which is morally and legally sacred when the tongue is no more able to give expression to a wish. Such are the eccentricities of human nature that there are many who cannot but laugh and joke in the very face of death itself. The most solemn scenes to many are times of levity, not because they are unsympathetic or mean to offend the more grave or melancholy feelings of others, but because of the natural buoyancy of their own dispositions and temperament. Many local wills and epitaphs of this nature might be cited. Jocular epitaphs have been written by the dying, and solemnly requested to be placed on their tomb-stones after death. So some of the most humorous and witty sayings in the language have been written on beds of languishing and distress, even when the writer was in agonising pains.

A husbandman was in the social scale a degree beneath a yeoman, for titles in olden times had far more definite limits than the questionable affix of Esq. which is now added to the name of every man who gains his living without taking his coat off his back. These husbandmen had wills to make, for they had properties to devise, some of them being comparatively wealthy. William Marsh, husbandman, of Hindley, for instance, devised in 1639 half of his property to his wife, Ellen, and legacies ranging from one shilling to three pounds to friends. He requested that his body should be buried at Wigan, and the expenses of his funeral and the usual feast to his friends should be paid out of his estates. To James Platt, son of John Platt, he bequeathed messuages in Hindley on condition that he should pay his relict, Alice, the sum of twelve pence whenever she requested it. Unfortunately history does not record whether she was a very solicitous widow.

"There is a tide in the affairs of men, which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;" so there is in the affairs of towns. They, too, have their histories, turning points, and opportunities. Persons who fail in life compare their present with their

past, the actual existing state of affairs with the once possible, but now only enviable, and say, "Thus we are, and yet how different we might have been." There are great towns which might have been insignificant villages, and villages that might have been great towns. Wigan might have been Manchester, but it is not. Its facilities for trade were once more advantageous than those of the great city of cotton, and its natural wealth is certainly greater. Moreover, Wigan might have been Oldham, but it is not. It was the purpose of the founder of the great staple work of Oldham to erect all his works in Wigan, but from pride or other want of foresight Wigan refused to allow it; the opportunity was lost, and that prosperous trade, with its many auxiliaries, was shut out of Wigan, and had to rear for itself the excellent town of Oldham. These are trades that might have existed in the town, but there have been other prosperous trades, which have left the town long ago, like the descendants of reduced families, who migrate to healthier climes. By far the most important of these lost trades is that of bell-casting, which gave employment to many skilled artisans in the town in the seventeenth century and affluence to the heads of the firms. It was then customary to take the metal to the place where the bell was wanted, and there melt and pour it into a place prepared for the casting in the churchyard, but with the Wigan bell-founders it was not so. All the work was done at their own establishments in the town, and the finished work despatched, with several skilled men to assist in the hanging of it. The carts on which the bells were conveyed were clumsy, and the roads were exceedingly bad, so that the work was always done at very great risk. The hanging of the bell was always a gay occasion, and in many old churchwardens' accounts in different parts of England and Wales the bill for beer to the Wigan workmen is carefully noted. There were several firms in the town, but only one on a very large scale. In the accounts of the Parish Church of Wigan there are frequently items in different names for bell-hanging and bell-mending. The largest firm undoubtedly was that of the Scott family, which existed in a prosperous state throughout the whole of the century. The original firm was that of James and John Scott. Their superior workmanship was well known throughout the country, and many bells made by them are still to be seen and heard. It is not recorded that they actually made any bells for Wigan, but several bills have been paid to them for repairing the several bells, for even at this time there was an excellent chime of bells in the Parish Church tower, and they seem to have been very frequently used, as the bell ringers were often paid extra wages for ringing news, and there are many bills for repairing or replacing ropes and clappers. In 1658 there are several small items paid for repairing gate doors, bell clock, ropes, clappers, and finger of clock, and in 1659 Jackson and Marsh did much bell repairing. Mr.

Jolly sent in his bill for climbing the tower and mending the finger of the clock—6d., and one shilling and a penny was the amount paid for a pint of oil (oyle) for bells and clock, whilst fivepence was given for a pound of candles. In the same year Edward Marsh received eight shillings and a penny for work about the great bell and mending the chimes, and Mr. Glover received ten shillings for making the great bell clapper, and in the following year (1660) he provided two more bell clappers, for which he charged and received eighteen shillings.—(Wigan Churchwardens' Accounts, 1659). From several such accounts it is evident there were many bell-founders in the town, but the Scotts undoubtedly took the lead in the trade. Their social position was high, and many members of the family took an honourable part in the government of the town. James and John Scott, the original firm of bell-founders, were bailiffs in 1627, and in the years 1653, 1688, and 1701 members of the same family were Mayors of Wigan.

Inscriptions in Latin or English were always part of the bell casting, as well as the names of the bell-founders, and often the churchwardens' initials. The Scotts never gave their names in full, but initials only. They seem, according to the churchwardens' accounts of Wilmslow, to have done the most of the bell work there. Frequent mention is made of them. For instance, in 1657, in the accounts there are :—

Given by Francis Newton, the younger, towards the casting of two bells; 2s. 6d.

Spent when wee did meete concerning the sendinge of the bells into Wygan to bee cast, of ourselves and those wch came from Wygan concerning them, 2s.

Spent when the bells were brought from Wygan, 3s.

July—Spent when the work was finished, of ourselves, the bell founder, and all the rest of the workmen, and several p'ishners which were with us that day, in meete and drink, 9s. 6d.

Mr. Earwaker, author of the history of East Cheshire says :—"The 'little bell' now in the tower of Wilmslow Church bears the following letters :—W. S., R. N., H. H., G. K., 1657, C. W. These are the initials of the churchwardens of that year."

William Smyth, Robert Newton, Hugh Heyes, George Kelsall. These names are in one line, underneath which are the initial letters of the bell-founder, W., J. S., Wigan, James Scott. In the churchwardens' accounts of Prestbury Parish, too, there are items "paid for fetchinge mettell from Wigan for the organes and for four locks for the organs," and in 1656 one of the bells there was re-cast by Scott, the Wigan bell-founder. In 1684 the entries occur :—

When Mr. Scott, the bell founder, came afterwards to Prestburie, when wee agreed with him for casting of the 4th bell, 4s. 6d.

Paid for carrying the said Bell to Wygan and Re-carrying to Prestburie, 15s.

Paid Mr. Scott, the Bell founder, for casting the Bell aforesaid, and for one hundred and twelve pound of mettelle, £18.

Mr. Earwaker again says :—"In the old tower of Lascal Church are three bells. On one is the letter S., a cross, and two bell-founders' marks ; on the largest of the three are the initials and date, J. S., W., 1656, showing that this bell, like the small one at Wilmslow, had been cast by Scott, of Wigan." In a private note from the same gentleman he informed me that he had also discovered an old Wigan bell in Wales.

The following is a copy of a most dilapidated document written in 1632, when Christopher Bancks was mayor, and William Ford and Richard Casson bailiffs, showing the recognised divisions of the town, and giving the names of the overseers of the highways in Wigan for that time :—

Overseers of the Highwayes within Wigan.

Standishgate	{	Willm Pilkington.
	{	Alexander forth.
Scoles	{	Willm Bancks.
	{	Michael forth.
Milnegate	{	Robt Barrowe, senior, gent.
	{	Laurence ford.
Markett Stidd	{	Thurstan Whalley.
	{	Robt. Mason.
Waltgate	{	Willm Ormeshawe.
	{	Willm Leighe.
Halegate	{	Roger Baron.
	{	Willm Waitson.
Woodhouses	{	James M (hole in document).
	{	Richard Seddon.

CHAPTER XV.

First Signs of Revolution—The Inhabitants of Wigan and the Parliamentary Vote—The Corporation—Mayor's Badge—Writ for 1639—Condition of Wigan at the beginning of the Great Rebellion—Potters of Wigan—Cotton—Flax—State of Roads—Religion in Wigan—Puritans—Education—Excitement during Election—Polling—The new Claimants of the Franchise—Abortive Parliamentary Petition.

MEN'S eyes at the beginning of the seventeenth century were being opened to see that they were not created to be the subjects of tyrannical kings, or the tools of political parties. The political awakening was gradual, and the *vista* strange to all, bewildering to many, and as a dream to not a few. The constitutional history of the past arrayed itself before thinking and representative men, and the dread danger of taking action appeared like a huge goblin before those who could neither review the past nor penetrate the future. The evils of the time were apparent to all, although the cure was but dimly seen by a few. People were not bold enough to rise against constituted authority, yet everyone seemed to long for a revolution, by which their difficulties might be banished with benefit to the masses without destroying or degrading the prerogatives of royalty. Even those holding the most radical views desired to proceed with the most conservative motion. Stronger and stronger, as people brooded over their increasing wrongs, grew the desire for revolution, coupled with the almost determination to repel rebellion. At length the whole nation seemed to conclude that something should be done, and that the unpleasant journey should be commenced and vigorously pursued, little dreaming of the terrible results that, step by step, they were bringing upon themselves before their ends could be attained. Conciliation was earnestly longed for, but that could only be obtained through the Parliamentary representatives; yet there had been no Parliament for eleven years. At length, in 1639, the rumour spread that the king would call a Parliament, and every man who had an influence in the returning of members beheld with joy the approaching tide of fortune, and felt that he could be an instrument in the longed-for peaceful revolution. Excitement spread to every county and representative borough, and nowhere was it more lively than in Wigan,

for there not only the duly enrolled burgesses but the ordinary inhabitants were eager to vote. For this year the mayor was James Molyneux. The aldermen were Roger Bradshawe, R. Standish, Robert Mawdesley, George Rigby, Richard Worsley, Christopher Bancks, James Hardy, William fforth, Robert Markland, William Pennington, and John Bullocke. The bailiffs were Robert Barrowe and Edward Sumpner. The two attorneys were Roger Baron and E. Sherrington, and the two scriveners, clerks, or solicitors were William Watson and Joseph Pennington.

The country was then passing into a new era of British history, like passengers in an express train rushing through a dark tunnel from one county to another. The whole country was being perceptibly smitten by a great delirious political fever. Wigan, too, was working herself up to the raving point. Many spoke openly in her streets and private houses of the abuses of royal power, yet few voices were raised against the king in person. There were dark whispers of not very distant troubles and terrors, revolutions, and even rebellions; yet the king was toasted in every tavern in the borough and prayed for in the church. The members of Parliament were both able men, and one, at least, was the very personification of loyalty, who, with true Lancashire stubborn steadfastness, determined to stand by the king, come weal or come woe. For the first time, at the then approaching election of 1639, indifference to the franchise gave place to enthusiastic interest on the part of the ordinary inhabitants, showing very healthy signs of advanced civilisation. Political speeches and public meetings were for the first time the common vehicles of the inhabitants for denunciation or approval. Unity in the guilds and unionism amongst tradesmen had proved a convincing strength that could not be overcome by any individual power, even when that was of a regal nature. Everyone now knew that the government of the country depended on the representatives of which the Parliament was composed, and also that these representatives depended on the choice of the individual voter, and hence the interest taken in their general election. There was neither expense, honorarium, nor paraphernalia in connection with the mayoralty in those early times. Had it been an expensive office, as it is now, few of those who could afford it would have accepted it. The town could not afford to attach either a salary or paid assistants. The early Corporation of Wigan was not a wealthy one. The great necessity—a *loving cup*—was their sole possession, useful and ornamental. Gifts, but no purchases, were added. The mayor was for the first time adorned with a Corporation badge—and it is a very superior and expensive gold one—on the occasion of the Prince and Princess of Wales visiting the borough to open the Royal Albert Edward Infirmary in June, 1874. Less than twenty years ago, when the mayor was invited to attend a meeting in London, he had to buy his own gown, and this in a town that could boast of an unbroken line of mayors for more than

six hundred years. Many wealthy and great men have been mayors, but in early times the citizens who were elected were worthy men, though rarely in such affluent circumstances as to permit of any lavish expenditure *pro bono publico*. The mayor in 1639 was James Molyneux, the bailiffs Robert Barrow and Edward Sumpnor, and these three were commanded by the sheriff, Robert Holte, Esq., to return two Parliamentary representatives to Westminster on the 13th day of April of that year. The following is a copy of the sheriff's order:—

Lanc. C. Robte Holte, Esqre., Sherriffe of the sd. county aforesaid.

To the Maior and Baliffes of the Burrow and towne of Wigan greeting.

Whereas I have received his Ma^{ty}s writt for the eleccōn of the knights of the Parliament to be holden att Westminster on the thirteenth day of Aprill next comeinge, and for the eleccōn of two citizens in every citie and two burgesses within every burrow within the said countie accordinge to the statute in that case made and provided, and that such eleccōn of the citizens and burgesses bee passed and returned unto mee by way of indentures respectively as named by the said writt is comanded. These are, therefore, to will and require you, and nevertheless, by virtue of the said writt, to comand you, that forthwith upon receipt *hereof* you elect and choose two burgesses of yor said burrow accordinge to the s of the statute in that case made and provyded, and that you pass over unto mee the names of those burgesses for to be elected by indenture on Saturday, beinge the one and twentieth day of this instant March, at Preston-in-Amounderness, and that you cause the said burgesses to bee att Westmr. on the said thirteenth day of Aprill next, haveing full and sufficient power for themselves and the comōalties of the said burrow to doo and agree unto such matters and things as shall happen to be ordained by the Comon Councell and his Ma^{ty}s Parliament of England concerning the good of his Ma^{ty}s state and kingdom, so that I may make return of the said writt accordinge as I am therein and thereby comanded, whereof fail not, as you will answer the contrary att yor p'ille, bringinge with you this prept.

Given under the seale of my office the fift day of March (1639).

ROBTE HOLTE.

Seal of the Sheriff of County.

Although many conclude that, because the town is now certainly not advancing in unison with the nineteenth century pace, it has always been some hundreds of years behind, the conclusion is indeed the very antipodes of truth. Judging from the reliable evidence left behind of the period into which we have now entered, there was no better governed town in England, nor one in which sanitary laws—rude, but advanced, for that age—were more strictly enforced. People were often fined at Court for not keeping their drains in order, and the idea is false that the town was not drained, and that heaps of filth or middens poisoned the air, and that dogs, cats, and heavy rains were the only scavengers of the period. Many inhabitants had vegetable gardens of their own beyond the walls, to which refuse was generally wheeled for productive uses. No town in England could possibly be more guarded in the reception of new inhabitants. Every able-bodied man is of monetary value to a town or country, but the old burghers of Wigan did not altogether appreciate this fact, but looked further. They did not consider that a

fresh comer who brought valuable services to the town was bestowing a service on the borough for which he deserved to be paid ; but, after the strictest scrutiny of his character, antecedents, and petition for admission to the town, these worthy burgesses would admit him as a great favour on payment of a large fine. The more important his trade was to the town, and the more likely he was to prosper, the greater his fine was. No one was allowed to stay in the town without special permission, which was never given without a satisfactory certificate from the last place of location, and good and substantial proof that the in-comer was not likely to become a burden to the borough. Of course many tried to evade the law ; but, judging from the many cases disposed of by the jury of burgesses at the Court Leet, very few, if any, could have escaped, for, moreover, anyone harbouring such strangers, or "foreigners," as they were called, were subject to excessive fines, which were always enforced when such cases were proved against them. Moreover, officials called "gatewaiters" were appointed to watch every entrance to the town, and to supervise the different districts for the express purpose of putting a stop to such increase of population. Every gatewaiter was held responsible for his district, and at many of the Court meetings they were fined for "neglect of duty" when they failed to detect any foreigner. Their fines were generally 3d. and 4d. a piece. Foreigners were usually fined three and ninepence, and ordered to get out of the town, whilst those harbouring them were fined the same amount, and ordered to turn their lodgers out of doors forthwith. The fines for being admitted burgesses or inhabitants ranged from three to ten pounds. By such strict legislation natives were generally the only inhabitants, and poverty was reduced to a minimum.

The entire population of England before the great Rebellion was only about five millions, and, although Wigan was considered a large town, the population was certainly under 5,000. The principal parts of the town were Standishgate, Millgate, Wallgate, Hallgate, Scholes, and Woodhouses, the first four of these being within the town walls. Houses in the borough were not numbered, but generally named, and strangers were directed to special ones as being so many doors from the Old Dog, Rose and Crown, Black Horse, or similar signs hung over taverns where the evenings were spent in drinking beer, listening to the news or gossip of the day, or singing rude ballads. Fights in the street were of frequent occurrence, and, although no cases of "purring" are reported, the admiring crowds rejoiced when an eye was knocked out or a finger chopped off. A servant to be beaten by a master, or a wife belaboured by her husband, was too common an occurrence to attract attention or sympathy. It was the duty of servant and wife to submit. The lash was the schoolmaster's chief assistant. The Moot Hall or Jail in the Wallgate had seldom its apartments unoccupied, and was so filthy and badly managed as to

become a nursery of disease and crime. The dress of the rich was more picturesque than that of any period in English history, but that of the poor was the other extreme. What has now become one of the staple trades of Wigan was then only in its infancy. Cotton wool was largely imported from Cyprus, and Smyrna, in the Levant, manufactured here, and vended in London. There were no mills with monster engines and a thousand looms, but the weaving was done on the hand-loom in the houses of the poor, although the owner of a loom was not then considered a poor man. The thread was spun on their own distaff by the younger ones of the household, whilst the father, wife, or older offspring wove the web—treading the mill all day long. A coach passing through the town—for there were none belonging to it—brought all the inhabitants out of their alleys with a rush, to gaze with open mouth, to admire and talk about it. An extensive trade in flax was carried on with Ireland. The yarn was brought over to Wigan and Manchester (which had only ten streets and a population of 6,000, and no member of Parliament), spun into fustians, dimities, and other such stuff, and bleached on the fields in the neighbourhood. Next to bell-founding the most important trade in the town was that of the potters, of whom there were many in Wigan, although both of these trades have long since entirely left the town. The clay was obtained from the waste lands of the manor. This important local trade is thus referred to in the award of Bishop Bridgeman in 1664 :—"Nevertheless alsoe I further award that the potters of Wigan for the tyme being may dig clay in the wasts of the said manor as heretofore potters of Wigan have used to doe, provided the places so digged be forthwith after the digging sufficiently amended." The wages of the workmen were only six shillings a week, and their chief food rye, barley, or oat cakes. Children had to work for their living when only six years of age. Many were engaged, at very low wages, in getting coal for the neighbourhood, Manchester, and London, although in counties where it was not easily obtained wood was used for fuel, until the fear came over the nation that all the wood in the country would soon be consumed, and none be left for the building of ships and for manufacturing purposes. There were merchants and artificers in the town, and yeomen or small farmers without, in large numbers, and of great influence, although rough and poorly educated. Being on the high road to the North, the accommodation of Wigan was considered good by travellers, who always found there clean beds and well-aired sheets. Although clergymen stood low in the social scale, yet Dr. Bridgeman, Rector of Wigan, Lord of the Manor, and afterwards Bishop of Chester, was of good family, and had a high social standing. His house was a lordly, well-defended one outside the walls, although his many retainers lived within, in the old Hallgate. The walls of the town, battered by the

storms of ages and assaults of many a foe, still stood, with their bulwarks, hornworks, redoubts, and batteries at intervals. There were four gates, strongly fortified. One, on the great Northern road, was near the present *Crown Inn*, in Standishgate, another near the present entrance to the London and North-Western Railway Station. The Hall Gate was near the Rectory, and the Mill Gate on the opposite side of the old town, near the Douglas. Outside the walls were tanneries, bleach fields, and many gardens and orchards. Beyond were dense woods with their wild denizens. The waters of the Douglas were clear, for even the salmon had not forsaken them. The streets were paved with boulders, but the suburban roads were so bad that six horses were often necessary to drag a coach through the mud. Cromwell, a few years after this, said he never rode over such bad roads. The crooked streets, winding alleys, and numerous narrow courts were never lighted, and thieves very easily escaped the vigilance of the night watchmen, while highwaymen were numerous in the country.

Like every town in England at this time, Wigan was divided against itself about religious belief. Men had slumbered, but this was the great time of awaking. They had lulled themselves into a soothing religious and political indifference, but now stormy convictions raged in their hearts. Numerous new sects sprang up with mushroom growth, each one believing that every other was the device of the wicked one, a mere will-o'-th'-wisp to waylay men's souls. The hearts of many and the heads of not a few were softened. Some strong men, during the religious revival, cried like children over the past, became new creatures, and then bellowed like bulls at their unconverted brethren. Uneducated labourers became parsons, and, regardless of the excruciating tortures to which they subjected their native tongue, vehemently denounced all but themselves. Notwithstanding the numerous ranting hypocrites, there were many sincerely good men. Episcopalians, Puritans, Presbyterians, Muggletonians, Milenarians, Quakers, and other sects were mingling and argumentatively wrestling in the church and on the streets of Wigan. They were in the throes of religious travail, and something approaching abortive anarchy was their offspring. Many wished to see in the Parish Church the gaudy ceremonials of the Romish faith, by which, so said their opponents, little minds, feeble intellects, and vain-glorious spirits were captivated. They wished to patronise pictures, images, crucifixes, and lights in the church. The communion table now received the Papal name of altar, and officiating clergy were more showily dressed. The Puritan clergy were persecuted, the Church was at war, and excitable people were driven to fanatical views and projects.

Education was at a low ebb. The Free Grammar School, with its head master and usher, on the present site of the Free Library, and near the walls, was the

local seat of learning. The vast majority of the townspeople could not write their own names, indeed the children had no time to go to school, for even Christians said they ought to begin to work for a living when six years old. Theirs was a hard lot, for they had to work ten and twelve hours a day, after which their little weary limbs were too tired for play, and, as they could not read, they were early trained to spend their evenings in gossip and singing of ballads. Their only education was how to live and bring their mites into the family purse.

It was an age of allegorical talk. Men seemed to pin their faith to high-sounding words, and believe that parables could be used only in the language of inspiration and truth. Though many were themselves hypocrites at heart, they acted as if they had no belief in the existence of hypocrisy, or as if they purposely and successfully educated themselves to deceive themselves. Even people who could not, without difficulty, lisp respectable sentences in English delighted to dress their mutilated mother-tongue in bombastic verbosity. What people did not understand themselves, they pretended to explain in language of awe, and thus ignorance passed for intelligence in the garb of supernatural unintelligibility. Even the most conventional conversation was reduced to farcical allegory, and yet out of the tumuli of Puritan verbosity had been unearthed that which has been acknowledged by all unprejudiced critics to be the grandest of all allegories, "The Pilgrim's Progress."

No means had been spared to Christianise the people. Acts of Parliament had been passed to force men into heaven, after which, if they did not attend divine service, they were liable to have their properties confiscated, &c. Everyone who refused to go publicly through the forms of English Episcopalianism had been treated as a Popish recusant, and under this head came even the quiet Quakers of Lancashire. Many local people had thus suffered for conscience sake, as Edward Symm, his wife, son, and two daughters; James Summer and his wife Ellen, as well as John Dike and his wife Jane, of Winstanley. Again, by order of the Long Parliament, Commissioners were sent into all parts of the country, Wigan amongst other places, to purge all churches and chapels of images, superstitious pictures and relics. Each sect, when in the ascendant, seemed to domineer with greater bigotry than its predecessor over the suffering people.

It was no difficult matter to stir and foment the political feelings of Wigan after the longed-for news came of a new election, for excitement creates desire for more excitement, and in the issuing of the writ there were seen signs of food for gratification. It was well known throughout the town that the election would be particularly lively. Between the delivery of the writ and the day of election the town was literally given over, and that for the first time, to electioneering. Every man was a politician in his own small way. All who could make speeches did so,

and that in the most violent and consequently most persuasive language that could be composed out of their very limited vocabulary, and many more attempted public speaking with the not unusual result of utter failure. The day of the election in March came round. There were neither hustings nor polling booths, nor even the votes given secretly, as by ballot. The election took place in the Moot Hall, where were gathered together about two hundred baronets, knights, yeomen, gentlemen of quality, and tradesmen, all sworn and enrolled burgesses of the ancient town, and many inferior persons, labourers, and handicraftsmen, who looked on eagerly and wistfully. The Town Clerk called the roll, and each burgess, as he was named, said what candidate or two candidates he voted for, and the names were immediately written down opposite the voter's. Thus there was neither secrecy nor unseemly publicity, and as every burgess was well known there could be no personation. Very few boroughs in 1639 registered in their poll books, as Wigan did, two hundred and ninety-six burgesses; yet not one-half of these voted, as if the town were still wrapt in that political lethargy which had long kept it in the background when it might have been in the front ranks of diplomacy. A close examination of this poll book, the original of which is temporarily in my possession, will show that, instead of the townsmen being callous about political matters, they had, politically, risen in the national estimation, and the following dozen years of their history prove they were worthy of esteem. Nearly twelve years had passed away since a Parliament had been called, and therefore this seemingly cold indifference to political matters is the more marked. The townsmen of Wigan were certainly not indifferent about their general election. The list of 293 burgesses is made up of two classes, viz., out-burgesses and in-burgesses. The former, filling rather more than half the book, were the local gentry, living generally at considerable distances beyond the walls. It is remarkable that only forty out of this list of one hundred and sixty-two recorded their votes. One earl, four baronets, and eight knights did not register their votes. All the other non-voters in this list were esquires and gentlemen. Amongst the townsmen, however, there is scarcely a man who does not vote. No less than six candidates had been nominated to stand for the election, although only two could sit in the House, and of these six three alone, Alexander Rigby, Ar., Orlando Bridgeman, Ar., and Robert Gardner had any claim to consider themselves favourites. The other three were altogether out of it. Simon Every (?) only polled one, although that one vote was given by Sir Roger Bradshaigh. Sir Anthony St. John polled four, and Edward Prescott (apparently a working man's candidate, if there were such in those days, for he is styled *taylor* in one place), after having scored about a dozen, was scratched like a horse when the owner has sold the race. Orlando Bridgeman obtained 112 votes; Alexander Rigby,

104 ; Robert Gardner, 72 ; Anthony St. John, 4 ; Edward Prescott, 1 (scratched out, as if he retired before the end of the poll) ; and Simon Every (?), Ar., 1, and thus the old poll book testifies that the townsmen were anxious about the government of the country and their own representatives. The first page of this old poll book for the general election of 1639 has been kept apparently as a scroll by the clerk, who, opposite the name of each candidate, made a *stroke* for every vote recorded, so as to be able to say at any time how the election was going. As this is the only poll book extant taken after the fashion of those for 1627 and 1640, and as it has not previously been published, I give a correct copy of it direct from the original :—

Jacobus molyneux, maior—Orlando Bridgeman and Alex. Rigby.
 Willus Comes Derby.
 Dutton . . . Gerrard.
 Gilbertus Hoghton, miles and Barronett—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Radus Ashton, Barronett.
 Willus Gerrard, Barronett.
 Edrus Stanley, Barronett.
 Alex. Radcliffe Balnei, miles.
 Anthonius Sanct John, miles.
 Cicell Trafford, miles.
 Johes Stanhope, miles.
 Johes Talbott, miles.
 Robtus wingfailde (?), miles.
 Thomas Perient, miles.
 Vivian molyneux, miles.
 Ricus Houghton, Ar.
 Petrus Venables, Ar.
 Chrofrus Anderton de Lostocks, Ar.
 Thomas Gerrard, Ar.
 Ricus Shuttleworth, Ar.
 Chrofrus Bannester, Ar.
 Robtus Blundell, Ar.
 Alex. Rigby de Burgh, Ar.—Mr. Alex. Rigby and Mr. Orlando Bridgeman.
 Johes Atherton, Ar.—Mr. Alex. Rigby and Mr. Orlando Bridgeman.
 Hugo Rigby, Ar.
 Alex. Rigby de Midleton, Ar.—Mr. Orlando Bridgeman.
 Orlando Bridgeman, Ar.
 Radus Ashton de Midleton, Ar.
 Thomas Standish, Ar.
 Johes moore, Ar.
 Edus. Ashton, Ar.
 Thomas Chernocke, Ar.
 Johes Poole, Ar.
 Radcliffe Ashton, Ar.
 Willus Houghton, Ar.—Mr. Alex. Rigby and Mr. Orlando Bridgeman.

Radus worthington, Ar.
 Jacobus winstanley, Ar.—Mr. Orlando Bridgeman and Mr. Alex. Rigby.
 Randulphus Read, Ar.
 Henricus Bannester, Ar.
 Thomas Langtree, Ar.—Mr. Alex. Rigby and Mr. Orlando Bridgeman.
 Thomas Cottam, Ar.
 Petrus Daniell, Ar.
 Thomas Stanley, Ar.
 Hugo Chumley, Ar.
 Johes Culcheth, Ar.—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Rogerus Nowell, Ar.
 Ricus Alport, Ar.
 Johes meare, Ar.
 Johes Gerrard, Ar.
 Edrus Bromley, Ar.
 ffranciscus Downes, sen., Ar.
 ffranciscus Leigh, Ar.
 Petrus Leigh, Ar.
 ffrus Downes, jun., Ar.
 Edrus Bridgeman, Ar.
 Radus Snead, Ar.
 Henricus Byrom, Ar.—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Ricus Ormeston, Ar.—Mr. Alex. Rigby and Mr. Orlando Bridgeman.
 Josuah Radcliffe, Ar.—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Abrahamus Langton, Ar.—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Edrus Scarsbreicke, Ar.
 Henricus Oagles, Ar.
 Petrus Birn, Ar.
 Robtus Chernocke, Ar.—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Georgius ffog, Ar.
 Adamus Hulton, Ar.
 Johes Rigby, Ar.
 Robtus Browne, Ar.—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Bartholemeus Hesketh, Ar.
 Thomas Lee, Ar.
 Johes Houlcrofte, Ar.
 Henricus Turvile, Ar.
 Willus Bradshawe, Ar.
 Josephus Klinesman, Ar.
 Willus Smith, Ar.
 Ricus Holland, Ar.
 Hamlett Hyde, Ar.
 Robtus Hyde, Ar.
 willus ffarrington, Ar.
 Rogerus Kirby, Ar.
 willus Radcliffe, Ar.
 Ricus Bavane, Ar.
 Robtus molyneux, Ar.

Georgius Lee, Ar.
 Hugo Adlington, Ar.—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Edrus Chisnall, Ar.
 Ricus Hackmall (or Hackinall), Ar.
 Thomas Longworth, Ar.
 Thomas Gerard, sen., de Ince, gen.
 Edrus Hoult, gen.—Orlando Bridgeman and Alex. Rigby.
 Edrus Morres, gen.
 Edrus Rigby, gen.
 Ricus Ashton, gen.—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Alex. Hoult, gen.
 — markland, gen.
 Abrahamus Launce (?), gen.—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Johes Bretherton, gen.—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Radus Browne, gen.—Orlando Bridgeman and Alex. Rigby.
 Thomas markland, gen.
 Georgius warren, gen.
 Lyonell farrington, gen.
 Johes Dunbabin (?), gen.
 Radus Heaton, gen.—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Thomas Ince, gen.—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.
 willus westbie, gen.
 Ricus fleetwood, gen.
 Henricus fleetwood, gen.
 Carolus walmsley, gen.
 Thomas Standishe, sen., de Duxbury, gen.—Alex. Rigby and Robert Gardner.
 Mathew Anderton, gen.
 Thomas Berrington, gen.
 Petrus Bennett, gen.
 Johes Eccleston, gen.
 willus Dicconson, gen.
 Petrus fulks, gen.
 Thomas Houlcrofte, gen.
 Petrus Travers, clicus.
 Thomas Bridge, clicus—Orlando Bridgeman and Alex. Rigby.
 Carolus Knott, clicus.
 Robtus fogg, clicus—Mr. Rigby.
 Jacobus whittakers, clicus.
 Edrus Eltonhead, gen.
 Edrus Tarbocke, gen.
 Alex. Bradshawe, gen.
 Radcliffe Gerrard, gen.
 Gilbtus Gerrard, gen.
 Hugo Houghton, gen.—Orlando Bridgeman and Alex. Rigby.
 Ricus Standishe, gen.
 Alex. Standishe, gen.
 Rogerus Urmeston, gen.
 Thomas Sergeant, gen.

Edrus Boulton de Abram—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.
 John Hulton, gen.
 John Osbaldeston, gen.
 Ricus Bannestre, gen.
 Josephus Rigby, gen.—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Robtus Shawe de high bullocke, gen.—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Hugo forth, gen.—Orlando Bridgeman and Alex. Rigby.
 Olivus martin, gen.—Alex. Rigby and Robert Gardner.
 Alex. Greene, gen.
 John Greene, gen.—Orlando Bridgeman and Alex. Rigby.
 Radus Bancks, gen.
 Robtus Booth, gen.
 John Aynscowe, gen.
 John Croston, gen.—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.
 willus stopforth, gen.
 Radus Laughton, gen.—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Alex. Jollie, gen.
 Thomas Gerard de Newhalle, gen.
 Edrus Parr, gen.
 Edrus Parr, gen.
 Thomas Albrugh, gen.
 Eliz'eus Hey, gen.—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Georgius walton, gen.
 Phillippus Osborne (?), gen.
 Egidius Heyshaw, gen.
 Willus Prescott, gen.—Alex. Rigby and Sir Anthony St. John.
 Ricus Sankey, gen.
 Thomas Brears, gen.—Alex. Rigby and Robert Gardner.
 John Gardner, gen.
 Abell Ashworth, gen.—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Radus Scott de Pemberton, gen.—Orlando Bridgeman and Robert Gardner.

The above are seemingly, although not certainly, *out-burgesses*, and the following *in-burgesses*, for which a new page is otherwise unnecessarily commenced :—

Rogerus Bradshawe, Ar., Ald.—Orlando Bridgeman and Mr. Every (?)
 Radus Standish, Ar., Ald.—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Robtus maudseley, Ald.—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Georgius Rigby, Ald.—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Ricus Worsley, Ald.
 Chrofrus Bancks, Ald.—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Jacobus Harvey, Ald. (*mortuus* in different handwriting, apparently written after).
 Radus forth, Ald. (scratched out) *mortuus est*—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.
 willus forth, Ald.—Orlando Bridgeman and Alex. Rigby.
 Robtus markland, Ald.
 willus Pilkington, Ald.—Orlando Bridgeman and Robert Gardner.
 John Brighouse, Ald.
 John Bullocke, Ald.
 Robtus Barrowne, gen., un Balli.—Orlando Bridgeman and Alex. Rigby.

Edrus Sumpner, gen., alter Balli.—Orlando Bridgeman and Alex. Rigby.
 Rogerus Baron, un Attor. Cur.—Orlando Bridgeman and Alex. Rigby.
 Balfr. Sherrington, alter Attorn.—Alex. Rigby and Robert Gardner.
 willus watson, S^vvien.—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Josephus Pennington, alter, S^vvien.—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Edrus Lloyd, gen.—Orlando Bridgeman and Alex. Rigby.
 willus Browne, gen.—Orlando Bridgeman and Alex. Rigby.
 Thomas Turner, gen.
 Georgius Rudall, gen.—Orlando Bridgeman and Alex. Rigby.
 Alex. Thompson, gen.—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Jacobus Scott—Robert Gardner and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Robtus Jollie—Robert Gardner and Alex. Rigby.
 Thurstanus whalley—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Rogerus Scott, gen.—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Johes Scott—Robert Gardner and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Ricus Casson—Alex. Rigby and Robert Gardner.
 Radus forth—Robert Gardner and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Willus Baldwin—Orlando Bridgeman and Robert Gardner.
 Laurencius fford—Orlando Bridgeman and Robert Gardner (?).
 Robtus mason (scratched), *mortuus est* in different handwriting.
 Robtus Gerard.
 Willus Bancks—Orlando Bridgeman and Robert Gardner.
 Robtus Bancks—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Georgius Vanse—Orlando Bridgeman and Alex. Rigby.
 Alex. fford—Robert Gardner and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Henricus marsden—Robert Gardner and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Gerrardus Bancks—Robert Gardner and Alex. Rigby.
 Gilbtus forth—Orlando Bridgeman and Robert Gardner.
 Johes Standishe—Mr. Rigby.
 Jacobus Atherton—Robert Gardner and Orlando Bridgeman.
 willus Gardner—Robert Gardner and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Radus Browne, Dyer—Robert Gardner and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Jacobus Langshawe—Robert Gardner and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Thomas Rylands—Orlando Bridgeman and Robert Gardner.
 willus marshe (scratched), *mortuus est*.
 Rogerus Laithwaite—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Radus Astley—Robert Gardner and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Gilbtus Ashton—Orlando Bridgeman and Robert Gardner.
 Robtus Woods—Alex. Rigby and Robert Gardner.
 Jacobus Higham—Alex. Rigby and Robert Gardner.
 Robtus Baldwin—Orlando Bridgeman and Alex. Rigby.
 Alex. forth, sen.
 Josephus Pennington (scratched).
 Robtus markland, Braseer—Robert Gardner and Alex. Rigby.
 Johes Hindley—Orlando Bridgeman and Alex. Rigby.
 willus Wakefeilde—Alex. Rigby and Robert Gardner.
 Chrofrus Gardner (scratched), *mortuus* in strange writing.
 Edmundus molyneux—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.

Thomas Barron—Orlando Bridgeman and Robert Gardner.
 willus Browne, Pewterer—Orlando Bridgeman and Robert Gardner.
 Ambrosius Jollie—Robert Gardner and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Robtus markland, jun.
 Michus Pennington—Orlando Bridgeman and Alex. Rigby.
 willus fford de le gate—Orlando Bridgeman and Robert Gardner.
 Robtus Baron—Alex. Rigby and Robert Gardner.
 Thomas Kidd, al's freland—Sir Anthony St. John and Robert Gardner.
 Radus Hindley—Alex. Rigby and Robert Gardner.
 Petrus Greene.
 Hugo Laithwaite.
 Robtus Langshawe—Orlando Bridgeman and Robert Gardner.
 Edrus Letherbarrow—Alex. Rigby and Robert Gardner.
 Robtus winstanley—Alex. Rigby and Robert Gardner.
 Edrus Ormeshawe—Orlando Bridgeman and Alex. Rigby.
 Rogerus Bibbie—Robert Gardner and Alex. Rigby.
 Jacobus Croucke—Orlando Bridgeman and Alex. Rigby.
 Carolus Bancks—Orlando Bridgeman and Robert Gardner.
 Robtus Shugsmith (?).
 Radus florster—Orlando Bridgeman and Robert Gardner.
 Thomas Pilkington—Robert Gardner and Sir Anthony St. John.
 Edrus ffairclough—Orlando Bridgeman and Robert Gardner.
 Johes Platt—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.
 willus Cookson—Orlando Bridgeman and Robert Gardner.
 Ricus Bullocke (scratched), *mortuus est* in strange handwriting.
 Thomas Marsden—Robert Gardner and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Edrus Boulton, Taylor—Robert Gardner and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Ricus Leigh—Orlando Bridgeman and Alex. Rigby.
 willus Lythgoe—Alex. Rigby and Robert Gardner.
 Humffrus Croytchloe—Alex. Rigby and Robert Gardner.
 Johes molyneux—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Robtus Brighthouse.
 Thomas ffairclough—Orlando Bridgeman and Alex. Rigby.
 Alex. fford, jun., Pewterer—Orlando Bridgeman and Alex. Rigby.
 willus Glover—Orlando Bridgeman and Robert Gardner.
 Gilbtus forth, Braseer—Orlando Bridgeman and Robert Gardner.
 Radus Scott—Robert Gardner and Alex. Rigby.
 Rogerus wood—Robert Gardner and Prescott, *taylor*.
 Edrus Pembton—Orlando Bridgeman and Alex. Rigby.
 Henricus Wakefeilde—Alex. Rigby and Robert Gardner.
 Alex. Pennington.
 Johes winstanley—Alex. Rigby and Robert Gardner.
 Thomas Orrell—Robert Gardner and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Seath Mason—Orlando Bridgeman and Robert Gardner.
 Gilbtus Leigh—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Humffrus Leigh.
 Jacobus ffynch—Robert Gardner and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Thomas Tarleton—Robert Gardner and Orlando Bridgeman.

Edrus Baron—Orlando Bridgeman and Robert Gardner.
 Robtus Briggs—Orlando Bridgeman and Robert Gardner.
 Radus Bancks—Orlando Bridgeman and Robert Gardner.
 Johes Rigby—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Rogerus Scott—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Thomas Cottrell.
 Jacobus Baldwin.
 Alex. fforth, jun.—Orlando Bridgeman and Robert Gardner.
 Galfrus mouldinge—Alex. Rigby and Robert Gardner.
 Milo Turner—Alex. Rigby and Robert Gardner.
 Jacobus watson—Alex. Rigby and Robert Gardner.
 Robtus Prescott—Robert Gardner and Alex. Rigby.
 Alex. Ormeshawe.
 Hugo Cowper—Robert Gardner and Mr. (torn away).
 Thomas Lowe—Mr. (torn away).
 Edrus Mason—Robert Gardner and Alex. Rigby.
 Edrus Prescott—Orlando Bridgeman and Alex. Rigby.
 Ricus Scott—Robert Gardner and Alex. Rigby.
 Hugo Scott—Robert Gardner and Alex. Rigby.
 Petrus Anderton—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Johes Gregson—Orlando Bridgeman and Sir Anthony St. John.
 Ricus Seddon—Alex. Rigby and Orlando Bridgeman.
 Johes Lee—Alex. Rigby and Robert Gardner.
 Thomas Thomas—Alex. Rigby and Robert Gardner.

When the names of all the registered voters were called over, a new but not unexpected incident took place. There had been many fiery electioneering speeches made during the preceding week. There were well-to-do people in the town, who were treated equally with burgesses, but who had not taken the burgess oath, and been formally enrolled in the book kept for that purpose. They declared they were entitled to vote, and in violent speeches publicly mentioned they were to vote, and if they were not allowed they were determined to petition Parliament against the election, and so unseat the members and have a new election.

The election was over, but not the excitement, for the intense interest which the "handicraftsmen and inferior persons" had taken in the exercise of the franchise had fixed in them that unreasonable conviction that there could be no fair election in which they were not privileged to take a part. It was impossible to prove their claims were illegal, but it was just as impossible to prove that they were legal, and therefore those in authority disallowed their claims, and asked them to prove their right. All that was required by the law was that two burgesses should be sent to Parliament to represent the borough; but, although no law declared that these two burgesses could only be returned by burgesses, yet there was the powerful precedent of custom that members had never been returned by any except duly enrolled burgesses standing against the new claimants. That custom was as strong as law itself, and,

had it been possible for these gentlemen, who, indeed, had all the privileges in the town of unenrolled burgesses, to prove any precedent of this custom having been violated, then they would thus have proved themselves entitled to vote. Such was the conclusion that the mayor and bailiffs came to, the claimants could not show the precedent required, and, for the time, their claims and enthusiasm died away like a nine days' wonder.

In certifying the Houses of Parliament of their conduct and proceedings, the mayor and bailiffs designated these as "inferior p'sons, labourers, and handicraftsmen," and owned that they had all the privileges of proper burghal traders, but at the same time denied their right to vote. In a body they came forward in the Moot Hall when the roll-call was over, and demanded that they should have a voice in the election. They were not hastily or scurrilously thrust away as interlopers, but in a dignified manner requested to prove their right of voting by naming a precedent of any unenrolled burgess voting. They were unable to do so, but still asserted their right. They were the first inhabitants of Wigan who took a lively and active interest in the franchise, and who showed their determination to have their political rights. They must have come to the conclusion that, as a body, they were not sufficiently organised to fight the battle, for they certainly did not petition. With the consent of the chosen members, the following letter was addressed and delivered to the Houses of Parliament in connection with this matter:—

To the Right hon^{ble} The k^{ts} Citizens and Burgesses to bee assembled in the Comons house of the ensueinge Parliam^t.

May it please you to be certified that the Maior, bailiffs, and Burgesses of the Borrowe of Wigan, in the Countie of Lanc^r, are by that name an ancient Corporacon by p'scripcon, and that all such p'sons as are or have beene Burgesses of that Corporation have always beene received into that Corporacon by elecon made by the Burgesses for the tyme p'sent of that Corporacon, and have been afterwards sworne and enrolled as burgesses in the Burges rolle of the towne there kept for that purpose, and that all Burgesses sent to Parliam^t to serve for that Burrowe have for the tyme whereof the memory of man is not to the contrary been chosen onely by the enrolled Burgesses of the Corporacon, and not by such p'sons as weare onely free to trade within the said Town, and weare not enrolled burgesses of the Corporacon. And that wee, the now p'sent Maior and bailiffes of the said towne, haveing lately received from the Sheriffe of the said Countie a warr^t for the choosinge of twoo Burgesses to serve for this towne att this ensueinge Parliam^t, did give due and ppublicue notice of that elecon to be upon this p'sent munday, beinge the 26th day of this p'sent moneth, in the comon moote hall of the said towne, att w^{ch} tyme and place, there beinge a greate assembly of Barron^{ts}, k^{ts}, esqrs., gen. of quality, and others, to the number of neare twoo hundred p'sons, all enrolled Burgesses of the said Corporacon, there was a free and ppublicue elecon made by the greater votes of them upon the call by the polle, and thereby Orlando Bridgeman and Alexander Rigby, Esqrs., twoo burgesses of the said Corporation, weare by the more voyces chosen to serve as Burgesses for the towne att the ensueinge Parliam^t, w^{ch} done it happened that att the verie end of the elecon divⁿ inferior p'sons, labourers, and handicraftsmen, beinge free onely to trade within the said towne, and

not enrolled Burgesses of the said Corporacion, did require voyces in that eleccion, and thereupon they weare demanded by us, the said Maior and bailiffes, to make it to appear that they or any others of their condicon hadd any tyme foomly any voyces in eleccion of the Burgesses for the Parliamt. but they could not soe doo, and therefore wee denyed to suffer them to vote in that eleccion. All w^{ch}. att the instance of the said Mr. Bridgeman and Mr. Rigby, wee have made bould to certifie. And in testimony thereof have sworn (?) to subscribe our names, and affixed the seale of the Corporacion, this 26th day of October, in the sixteenth yeare of the Reigne of our Sov^aigne Lord Kinge Charles ov^r England, Scotland, ffraunce, and Ireland.

The above is but the original draft copy of the petition, has several erasures, is not signed by the Mayor or bailiffs, and has not the seal of the Corporation attached.

CHAPTER XVI.

Members of Parliament for the Borough, from 1295 to 1881.

NO part of the History of Wigan is likely to be more generally appreciated than that which pertains to the Borough Elections, and therefore this first volume cannot be better brought to a close than with a digest of the Parliamentary results as a ready reference to the reader. A complete list of members from the earliest times was ordered to be printed by Parliament, so that every member for Wigan, as far as could be ascertained by adepts at research, is given in this list, to which I have been enabled to add information, never before published, from old poll-books and Parliamentary petitions, obtained from the strong chest at the Borough Courts. Independent of this, of course, every important election is treated of in detail in chronological order.

RESULTS OF THE BOROUGH ELECTIONS FROM 1295 TO 1881.

Parliament of Edward I. Assembled November 27th, 1295, at Westminster.
William Le Teinterer
Henry Le Boucher

Last Parliament of Edward I. Assembled January 20th, 1306-7, at Carlisle.
Simon Payer
John Le Merse
No further returns for 240 years.

First Parliament of Edward VI. Assembled November 4th, 1547; dissolved April 15th, 1552.
Alexander Barlow
Thomas Carus

Second Parliament of Edward VI. Assembled March 1st., 1552-3; dissolved March 31st, 1553.
Alexander Barlow
Gilbert Gerard

First Parliament of Mary. Assembled October 5th, 1553; dissolved December 5th.
Alexander Barlow
Gilbert Gerard

Second Parliament of Mary. Assembled April 2nd, 1554; dissolved 5th May.

Alexander Barlow
William Berners

First Parliament of Philip and Mary. Assembled November 12th, 1554; dissolved January 16th, 1555.

Alexander Barlow
John Barnes

Second Parliament of Philip and Mary. Assembled October 21st, 1555; dissolved December 9th.

Alexander Barlow
Gilbert Gerard

Third Parliament of Philip and Mary. Assembled January 20th, 1557-8; dissolved November 17th, 1558.

Ralph Barton
Thomas Smyth

First Parliament of Elizabeth. Assembled January 23rd, 1558-9; dissolved May 8th, 1559.

William Gerard
Thomas Bromley

Second Parliament of Elizabeth. Assembled January 11th, 1562-3; dissolved January 2nd, 1566-7.

William Gerard
Richard (or John) Fortesque

156— Bye Election for Fortesque, probably deceased, John Radcliffe.

Third Parliament of Elizabeth. Assembled April 2nd, 1571; dissolved May 29th.

William Gerard
Owen Radcliffe

Fourth Parliament of Elizabeth. Assembled May 8th, 1572; dissolved April 9th, 1583.

Edward Fitton
Edward Elrington

Fifth Parliament of Elizabeth. Assembled November 23rd, 1584; dissolved September 14th, 1585.

William Gerard
Thomas Grimsditch

Sixth Parliament of Elizabeth. Assembled November 15th, 1586; dissolved March 23rd, 1586-7.

William Gerard
Peter Legh of Bradley

Seventh Parliament of Elizabeth. Assembled February 14th, 1588-9; dissolved March 29th, 1589.

Peter Legh
William Leicester

Eighth Parliament of Elizabeth. Assembled February 19th, 1592-3; dissolved April 10th, 1593.

William Gerard
Michael Heneage

History of Wigan.

Ninth Parliament of Elizabeth. Assembled October 24th, 1597; dissolved February 9th, 1597-8.
Edward Legh
Nicholas Smythe

Tenth Parliament of Elizabeth. Assembled October 27th, 1601; dissolved December 19th.
Roger Downes
John Poulteney

First Parliament of James I. Assembled March 19th, 1603-4; dissolved February 9th, 1610-11.
Sir John Poulteney, Knt.
Sir William Cooke, Knt.

Second Parliament of James I. Assembled April 5th, 1614; dissolved June 7th.
All returns lost. Sir Wm. Cooke supposed to be one member.

Third Parliament of James I. Assembled January 16th, 1620-1; dissolved February 8th, 1621-2.
Sir Thomas Gerard
Roger Downes
February 28th, 1620-1—Bye Election, Thomas Gerard, deceased, George Gerard.

Fourth Parliament of James I. Assembled February 12th, 1623-4; dissolved March 24th, 1625.
Sir Anthony St. John, Knt.
Francis Downes

First Parliament of Charles I. Assembled May 17th, 1625; dissolved Aug. 12th.
Francis Downes
Edward Bridgeman

Second Parliament of Charles I. Assembled February 6th, 1625-6; dissolved June 16th, 1626.
Sir Anthony St. John
Sir William Poley, Bart.

Third Parliament of Charles I. Assembled March 17th, 1627-8; dissolved March 10th, 1628-9.
Sir Anthony St. John, 65
Edward Bridgeman, 63
Robert Gardner, 8
Edward Boulton, 1
Peter Houlford, Esq., 1
William Prescott, 1
Milus Pooley, 1

Fourth Parliament of Charles I. Sat for three weeks, in 1639.
Orlando Bridgeman, Ar., 112
Alexander Rigby, Ar., 104
Robert Gardner, 72
Sir Anthony St. John, 4
Simon Every, Ar., 1
Edward Prescott, 1

Long Parliament. Assembled April 13th, 1640; dissolved April 20th, 1653.

Orlando Bridgeman (Royalist)
Alexander Rigby (Parliament)

Sir Orlando Bridgeman expelled the House 29th April, 1642. New writ ordered 30th December, 1645,
and John Holcroft elected March 30th, 1646.

Commonwealth. Assembled July 5th, 1653; dissolved December 12th.

No returns from Boroughs.

Under Protector Oliver Cromwell. Assembled September 3rd, 1654; dissolved January 22nd, 1654-5.

No return from Wigan.

Second Parliament under Protector. Assembled September 17th, 1656; dissolved February 8th, 1657-8.

No return from Wigan.

Under Richard Cromwell, Protector. Assembled January 27th, 1659; dissolved April 22nd.

Hugh Forth
Robert Markland

First Parliament of Charles II. Assembled April 25th, 1660; dissolved December 29th.

Hugh Forth } together } John Molyneux
William Gardiner } with } Roger Stoughton

Election void, because of double return. New writ issued.

October 22nd 1660.—John Molyneux
Roger Stoughton

Second Parliament of Charles II. Assembled May 8th, 1661; dissolved January 24th, 1678-9.

Charles Earl of Ancrum
Geoffrey Shackerley

Third Parliament of Charles II. Assembled March 6th, 1678-9; dissolved July 12th, 1678-9.

Charles Earl of Ancrum (Tory)
Roger Bradshaigh (Tory)

Fourth Parliament of Charles II. Assembled October 17th, 1679; dissolved January 18th, 1680-1.

Charles Earl of Ancrum (Tory)
William Bapkes (Whig)

Fifth Parliament of Charles II. Assembled at Oxford March 21st, 1680; dissolved March 28th, 1681.

Charles Earl of Ancrum (Tory)
Richard Viscount Colchester (Whig)

History of Wigan.

First Parliament of James II. Assembled May 19th, 1685; dissolved July 3rd, 1687.

Charles Earl of Ancrum (Tory)

Lord Charles Murray (Tory)

Convention. Assembled January 22nd, 1688-9; dissolved February 26th, 1689-90.

Sir Edward Chisenhall, knt. (Whig)

William Bankes (Whig)

First Parliament of William and Mary. Assembled March 20th, 1689-90; dissolved October 11th, 1695.

Peter Shackerly (Tory)

Sir Richard Standish Bart. (Whig)

January 24th, 1693-4.—Bye Election, Sir Richard Standish, deceased, John Byrom.

Second Parliament of William and Mary. Assembled November 22nd, 1695; dissolved July 7th, 1698.

Peter Shackerley (Tory)

Sir Roger Bradshaigh (Tory)

Third Parliament of William and Mary. Assembled August 24th, 1698; dissolved December 19th, 1700.

Sir Roger Bradshaigh, Bart. (Tory)

Orlando Bridgeman (Tory)

November 24th, 1699.—Election petitioned against unsuccessfully by defeated candidate, Alex. Rigby.

Fourth Parliament of William and Mary. Assembled February 6th, 1700-1; dissolved Nov. 1st, 1701.

Sir Roger Bradshaigh (Tory)

Orlando Bridgeman (Tory)

Fifth Parliament of William and Mary. Assembled December 30th, 1701; dissolved July 2nd, 1702.

Sir Roger Bradshaigh (Tory)

Sir Alexander Rigby, Knt. (Whig)

First Parliament of Anne. Assembled August 20th, 1702; dissolved April 23rd, 1705.

Sir Roger Bradshaigh (Tory)

Orlando Bridgeman (Tory)

Second Parliament of Anne. Assembled October 25th, 1705; dissolved April 15th, 1708.

Sir Roger Bradshaigh (Tory)

Emanuel Howe (Whig)

Third Parliament of Anne. Assembled November 18th, 1708; dissolved September 23rd, 1710.

Sir Roger Bradshaigh (Tory)

Henry Bradshaigh (Tory) } Brothers

Fourth Parliament of Anne. Assembled November 25th, 1710; dissolved August 8th, 1713.

Sir Roger Bradshaigh (Tory)

Henry Bradshaigh (Tory)

April 27th, 1713.—Bye Election, Henry Bradshaigh, deceased, George Kenyon (Tory).

Fifth Parliament of Anne. Assembled February 14th, 1713-14; dissolved January 13th, 1714-15.

Sir Roger Bradshaigh (Tory)

George Kenyon (Tory)

State of poll—Sir Roger Bradshaigh, 128; George Kenyon, 104; Earl of Barrymore (Tory), 87.

March 3rd, 1713-14. Barrymore's petition against election was dismissed.

First Parliament of George I. Assembled March 17th, 1714-15; dismissed March 10th, 1721-22.

Sir Roger Bradshaigh (Whig)

James Earl of Barrymore (Tory)

Second Parliament of George I. Assembled October 9th, 1722; dissolved July 17th, 1727.

Sir Roger Bradshaigh (Whig)

James Earl of Barrymore (Tory)

First Parliament of George II. Assembled January 23rd, 1727-8; dissolved April 18th, 1734.

Sir Roger Bradshaigh (Whig)

Peter Bold (Tory)

Second Parliament of George II. Assembled January 14th, 1734-5; dissolved April 28th, 1741.

Sir Roger Bradshaigh (Whig)

James Earl of Barrymore (Tory)

Third Parliament of George II. Assembled December 1st, 1741; dissolved June 18th, 1747.

Sir Roger Bradshaigh (Whig)

James Earl of Barrymore (Tory)

March 11th, 1746.—Bye Election, Sir Roger Bradshaigh, deceased, Richard Clayton (Whig).

Fourth Parliament of George II. Assembled November 10th, 1747; dissolved April 8th, 1754.

Richard Clayton (Whig)

Hon. Richard Barry (Tory)

Fifth Parliament of George II. Assembled May 31st, 1754; dissolved March 20th, 1761.

Hon. Richard Barry (Tory)

Sir William Meredith (Whig)

First Parliament of George III. Assembled May 19th, 1761; dissolved March 12th, 1768.

Fletcher Norton (Whig)

Simon Luttrell (Tory)

February 1st, 1762.—Fletcher re-elected on being appointed Solicitor-General.

December 24th, 1763.—Fletcher re-elected on being appointed Attorney-General. Opposed at the election by George Byng, Esq., who polled 39 votes against 71 for Mr. Norton. Registered voters, 129.

Second Parliament of George III. Assembled May 31st, 1768; dissolved September 30th, 1774.

George Byng (Whig)

Beaumont Hotham (Whig)

John Smith-Barry, Esq.

State of Poll—Byng, 57; Hotham, 54; J. H. Smith-Barry (Tory), 44.

Third Parliament of George III. Assembled November 29th, 1774; dissolved September 1st, 1780.

George Byng (Whig)

Beaumont Hotham (Whig)

May 23rd, 1775.—Bye Election, Hotham appointed Judge, John Morton (Tory).

August 21st, 1780.—Bye Election, John Morton, deceased, Henry Simpson Bridgeman (Tory).

Fourth Parliament of George III. Assembled October 31st, 1780; dissolved March 25th, 1784.

Henry Simpson Bridgeman (Tory)

Hon. Horatio Walpole (Whig)

State of Poll—Bridgeman, 58; Walpole, 36; Sir Richard Clayton, Bart. (Tory), 33.

September, 1782.—Bye Election, Henry Simpson Bridgeman, deceased, John Cotes (Whig).

May 2nd, 1783.—Bye Election, Walpole appointed Secretary and Registrar to Chelsea Hospital,
Hon. H. Walpole re-elected.

Fifth Parliament of George III. Assembled May 18th, 1784; dissolved July 6th, 1790.

John Cotes (Whig)

Orlando Bridgeman (Tory)

Sixth Parliament of George III. Assembled November 25th, 1790; dissolved May 20th, 1796.

John Cotes (Tory)

Orlando Bridgeman (Tory)

Seventh Parliament of George III. Assembled September 27th, 1796; dissolved June 29th, 1802.

John Cotes (Tory)

Hon. Orlando Bridgeman (Tory)

June 21st, 1800.—Bye Election, Hon. O. Bridgeman succeeded to Peerage, George William Gunning
(Tory).

Eighth Parliament of George III. Assembled November 16th, 1802; dissolved October 24th, 1806.

Robert Holt Legh (Tory)

John Hedson (Tory)

Ninth Parliament of George III. Assembled December 15th, 1806; dissolved April 29th, 1807.

Robert Holt Legh (Tory)

John Hodson (Tory)

Tenth Parliament of George III. Assembled June 22nd, 1807; dissolved September 29th, 1812.

Robert Holt Legh (Tory)

John Hodson (Tory)

Eleventh Parliament of George III. Assembled November 24th, 1812; dissolved June 10th, 1818.

Robert Holt Legh (Tory)

John Hodson (Tory)

Twelfth Parliament of George III. Assembled January 24th, 1819; dissolved February 29th, 1820
 Sir Robert Holt Legh, Bart. (Tory)
 John Hodson (Tory)

First Parliament of George IV. Assembled April 23rd, 1820; dissolved June 2nd, 1826.
 James Alexander Hodson (Tory)
 Lord Lyndsay (Tory)

State of Poll—Hodson, 50; Lyndsay, 43; Viscount Newport (Tory), 31.
 April 6th, 1825.—Bye Election, Lord Lyndsay succeeded to Peerage, James Lindsay (Tory).

Second Parliament of George IV. Assembled November 14th, 1826; dissolved July 24th, 1830.
 James Alexander Hodson (Tory)
 James Lindsay (Tory)

First Parliament of William IV. Assembled October 26th, 1830; dissolved April 22, 1831.
 James Alexander Hodson (Tory)
 James Lindsay (Tory)
 State of Poll—Hodson, 54; Lindsay, 45; J. H. Kearsley (Tory), 12; Jas. Hardcastle (Whig), 7;
 Richard Potter (Whig), 3.
 March 1st, 1831.—Bye Election, Hodson resigned, John Hodson Kearsley (Tory).

Second Parliament of William IV. Assembled June 14th, 1831; dissolved December 3rd, 1832.
 John Hodson Kearsley (Tory)
 Ralph Thicknesse (Whig)
 State of Poll—Thicknesse, 30; Kearsley, 24; Hon. R. B. Wilbraham (Tory), 15; Potter (Whig), 4.

Third Parliament of William IV. First after passing of Reform Bill. Assembled January 29th, 1833;
 dissolved December 30th, 1834.
 Ralph Thicknesse (Liberal)
 Richard Potter (Liberal)
 State of Poll—Thicknesse, 302; Potter, 296; J. Whittle (Liberal), 212; J. H. Kearsley (Conservative),
 174. Number of registered electors, 483.

Fourth Parliament of William IV. Assembled February 19th, 1835; dissolved July 17th, 1837.
 John Hodson Kearsley (Conservative)
 Richard Potter (Liberal)
 State of Poll—Kearsley, 296; Potter, 191; C. Standish (Liberal), 166. Number of registered voters, 512.

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 F. S. Powell (Conservative), 324
 October, 1854, on decease of Mr. Thicknesse.
 Joseph Acton (Liberal), 339
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Fifth Parliament of Queen Victoria, March, 1857.

F. S. Powell (Conservative), 493
 Henry Woods (Liberal), 447
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Sixth Parliament of Queen Victoria, April, 1859.

Hon. J. Lindsay (Conservative), 500
 Henry Woods (Liberal), 476
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Hon. J. Lindsay (Conservative)
 Henry Woods (Liberal)
 April, 1866, on the resignation of the Hon. J. Lindsay.
 Nathaniel Eckersley (Conservative), 411
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 John Lancaster (Liberal), 2166
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Ninth Parliament of Queen Victoria, February, 1874.

Lord Lindsay (Conservative), 2493
Thomas Knowles (Conservative), 2401
John Lancaster (Liberal), 1883
William Pickard (Labour Candidate), 1134
Henry Woods (Liberal), 1029

Tenth Parliament of Queen Victoria, April 1st, 1880.

Lord Lindsay (Conservative), 2946
Thomas Knowles (Conservative), 2913
John Lancaster (Liberal), 2880
Colonel McCorquodale (Liberal), 2655

On Lord Lindsay being raised to the Peerage, July 18th, 1881.

Mr. F. S. Powell (Conservative), 3005
Mr. J. Lancaster (Liberal), 2536

This Election was petitioned against, and Mr. Powell unseated, April 1st, 1881.

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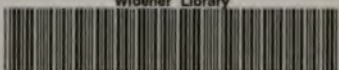
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